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DIANA OF THE DEEP SNOWS

BY

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CHAPTER I

DANIEL TRESPERSON McDUNN, of Kalamawassett, owned mines and ranches and railroad stocks, factories, tanneries, and banks, timber-lands in Oregon and Maine, house-lots and houses, office blocks, a street-car line, and a church. This last he built in memory of his father, the first Daniel McDunn, founder of the McDunn dynasty, and gave its use, rent free, to the First Baptist Society of Kalamawassett.

Beyond everything, D. T. McDunn was acquisitive; next he was executive. People said there was no person or thing that Daniel T. could not manage. They were wrong.

He could not manage his son, John Tresperson McDunn.

The boy was wilful, spoiled, and arrogant. Daniel succeeded in his management of affairs because he understood business, but he did not understand boys; so he failed with Jack. When the latter reached his unruly fifteenth year, Daniel shipped him off to an Eastern military school in the hope that the discipline of strangers might prove more salutary than his own.

Later, when Jack managed to squeeze through his Harvard entrance examinations, his father breathed a sigh of semi-relief and doubled the young fellow's allowance.

It is both unnecessary and undesirable to trace Jack McDunn's

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school and college career. If he had saving traits, let us credit them to his stout McDunn ancestry. If he showed reprobative leanings, let us charge them up against an injudicious chemistry of liberty, youth, and pocket-money. It is essential to bear in mind, however, that where he seemed to lack principle, he was not wanting in character. He was masterful, strong-willed, dominant. He did not follow, he led.

One thing surely helped to keep him from going to the devil, bag and baggage: that was athletics. Yet even in football his unruly disposition militated strongly against success. The coaches could not control him. He was insubordinate, insolent, and swaggering. He played a reckless, daredevil game; his fearlessness equalled his speed, and was buttressed by a wiry, panther's strength. But he was ruled off his freshman team by the harassed coaches and so missed an undoubted opportunity to shine in the game with the Yale freshmen.

In his sophomore year he broke training wantonly, although making a creditable showing on the 'varsity during the early part of the season; and when he returned, hectic and irritable after a three days' absence, found himself relegated to the scrub. There he shortly lost interest, and dropped out in pique for the balance of the season.

The next season, however, he came back and reported to the doubting coaches for practice. To be sure, they were for a long time wary; but as he rapidly demonstrated his superiority over candidates for end, they came at length to view him with confidence and to count him highly available material.

Then, because he was doing his best, because he was fearlessly aggressive, he sustained an injury, and had to be laid off. But every afternoon he got into his playing togs, and hobbled painfully out on the field with the subs, sitting in a misery of disappointment on the side-lines during the increasingly rigorous practice. The coaches and captain, disgusted as he himself at the misfortune which deprived the team of the best end it had developed in years, watched for McDunn to go once more in pursuit of the white-light allurements of Boston. But he stuck doggedly about, nursing his injured ankle, and submitted grimly to the handling of doctor and trainers. The ankle grew better, but so slowly that he missed both big games before the battle with Yale, and on the morning of *the* football day of the year, he felt that his prospects for winning his "H" were hopelessly gone. His ankle was almost entirely well, but by this time a regular end and first substitute had been chosen and drilled, and he found himself a bad third choice for the position. As the team ran out on the field, and two-thirds of the big human horseshoe of the Stadium galvanized into a frenzied, throbbing riot of fluttering crimson, Jack McDunn felt dully that not one throat of all those thousands owed him the fraction of a wasted cheer. He was, for that year at least, down and out.

CHAPTER II

HARVARD-YALE football games have been more frequently described than any other piece of scenery we know anything about. They are in the same class with the Alps and the Passion Play and the battle of Gettysburg. Every novelist takes a crack at one sooner or later. Every newspaper man has an annual opportunity to think up new words to characterize the different aspects of intercollegiate gridiron warfare. Just as the available supply of adjectives began to peter out, the building of the Stadium came to the rescue of the gasping journalistic fish who could not live unless swimming in an ocean of descriptives. It supplied human cliffs, and precipices of eager faces, and Brobdingnagian bowls, and all that sort of thing, until one wonders what words will be left when Yale comes through with that proposed amphitheatre so long in prospect.

On a certain November afternoon, which you yourself may remember, the forty thousand and odd spectators in the Stadium witnessed the unusual occurrence of a big game in the rain. Everything was damp except the enthusiasm, for the schedule-makers had neglected the weather-man, who did his best to drown every one, from coaches to ticket-speculators. The Stadium, having one open end and numerous scuppers, escaped becoming a big swimming-pool for all but the players, who would have been materially assisted by life-belts.

Jacintha Bruce sat away up in row double-M of section Six, on the Yale side. With her were Senator Walbridge N. Bruce, her father; Lancey Keane (Yale Oofy-Nine); and Xenia Delmore, to whom Lancey, who had won his Y the year before, explained the plays and pointed out the different participants by names already familiar from liberal newspaper mention.

Jacintha had seen many Harvard-Yale games, and her partisanship leaned heavily Blueward. Her father was a classmate of a certain exalted personage who shall be nameless here, but who, as Mr. Dooley would say, would jump a fut if ye hollered "Bill" at 'im from behoind. He was that particular Senator of the United States whom the great commonwealth of M—— sent to Washington as a result of a real victory of "the people." By that is not meant "the pee-pul," in the ordinary sense, but rather the honest, thoughtful, cool-judging folk who are not usually sufficiently in the majority to have their way. Senator Bruce was a big figure in national affairs. Motherless since early childhood, Jacintha had looked to him for, and found in him, those gentler and more intimate sympathies which all good mothers, but so few fathers, know how to express. Like him, she had grown frank, open, and self-reliant. Yet while she must perforce learn, more than most girls, the drift of masculine thought-process, and felt a certain contempt

for the more patent smallness of her own sex, she was not unfeminine, and did not offend by any trait of what is termed the "strong-minded" woman.

She was a big girl, but so close-knit and of such equable proportions that her stature gave her no awkwardness. She radiated a vital, magnetic quality of good nature.

When she was fifteen years old her ideal of manhood was Ty Cobb. Likewise she thought favorably of John L. Sullivan as a promising candidate for a niche in the Hall of Fame—a niche where his bust would be so lighted as not to suffer by comparison with other niche-inhabiting effigies. But at nineteen she catalogued her father as the truest and best sportsman of all her galaxy. To him and to her friends, she was almost invariably "Jack"—and the name fitted her admirably.

A big game on a crisp, bright autumn day is one thing, but a game in a driving rain is "something else again." Jacintha wore a rubber poncho and sou'wester, and Xenia a conventional raincoat and hood, but the Senator and young Keane had bought great squares of table oilcloth, each with a head-hole cut in the centre, poncho-fashion. All through the great throng shivering on the high-pitched slopes you could see hundreds of men and women similarly protected. The storm had come on rather suddenly about noon, so that all but a comparative few had been forced to raid the stores from Harvard Bridge to the square for such water-shedding garments as could be had. If you own a perfectly good raincoat at home, you hate to buy a new one just for one football game, and the oilcloth expedient became epidemic from the moment the first inventive soul appeared swathed in folds of the shiny marbled fabric. Enterprising dealers in the square had telephoned rush orders to their wholesalers, so that the number of those who could be accommodated with the goods was amazing. But as the color assortment was limited to reds, grays, and whites, and the impatient purchasers had bought in the haste which fears a famine, great crimson splashes appeared almost as indiscriminately on the Yale side of the Stadium as among the more appropriate surroundings of the Harvard sections.

To Jacintha, the unusual aspect of the occasion appealed with delighting novelty. Great drifts of wreathing rain curled over the lofty rim and swept along like mists in a valley, dimming the opposite stands in a drenching haze. The crimson and blue banners refused to flutter with the gay and flamelike splendor of sunnier days. The vast background of welded humanity showed countless unbroken lines of rain-bleached faces, unrelieved by the usual florescence of feminine head-gear. From her place to the side-lines dropped the swift slope of water-soaked backs and shoulders, broken only by patches of red or white oilcloth, while upon the just and the unjust (but mostly just, since

they were all for Yale,) fell the merciless patter, patter, of the rain. Hat-brims ran with small rivers that drizzled at back or front according to their wearers' several hat-tipping habits.

The slicker-clad cheer-leaders, in swaying, lemon-colored ranks at open order along the side-lines, drew from the multitude vast, hoarse thunders. The concerted shouts of the Harvard rooters volumed across the field in a pulsing tumult, undiscouraged by the falling waters, but wanting the resonance that a clearer atmosphere would have given it; and the staccato, nervous beat of Yale's "brek-ek-co-ex, co-ex, co-ex," lost a certain shrill quality of pitch, though lacking nothing of its accustomed savagery.

"Is n't it all wonderful, wonderful!" cried Jacintha, hugging the Senator's arm.

Senator Bruce thumped a damp and frozen foot violently upon the concrete.

"Marvellous," he replied grimly. "Are n't you cold?"

"Cold?" she echoed. "H'm! Cold!"

If anything were needed to quicken and warm Jacintha's normally racing blood, the fortunes of the game furnished the required stimulus, for Yale was clearly outplaying her ancient foe. The players drifted back and forth through oozing mud and seas of water, the ball, treacherously slippery, frequently eluding them. Jacintha had never seen so many fumbles in one game, yet this feature added materially to the excitement of the day, as the big throng rose repeatedly to watch with agonized intensity the result of every missed catch. The Harvard full-back constantly outpunted his ends, so that Yale's losses on fumbled punts were less costly than Harvard's, while the Yale defense found ample time to develop its protective formation for a long run-back whenever the ball was well caught.

Jacintha Bruce saw with the eye of experience that Harvard was unusually weak at right end, and Lancey Keane's running comment confirmed her opinion. Again and again Yale catapulted her backs between tackle and end, or gained with equal certainty by the outside route; and finally, just before the end of the first half, it was the hapless right end who dropped the ball fatally near the Harvard goal line, and—Yale scored!

A savage howl of triumph from the Blue sections peaned the result to the weeping skies.

A new end appeared with the reopening of play, and for a while the fierce Yale attack lost its effectiveness at that point. Assault upon the other flank proving of little profit, Yale's quarter concentrated his forces between alternate right and left tackles and guards, but with indifferent success. The heavy Harvard defense, aided by the slippery field, held like a log stockade. So the Yale quarter sent his punter

back for a kick, and the wet ball, spinning elusively, shot straight into a pair of clutching Harvard hands and—out again. A second pandemonium shattered the air when Yale saw the ball in her own team's possession on Harvard's eight-yard line.

It was too far at the side for an attempt at a field goal, and the rhythmic "Touch-down, touch-down, touch-down!" echoed from the frenzied Yale stands. A left-end play netted a lost yard, but on the next down the crashing attack gave Yale five yards between right tackle and end. "Touch-down, touch-down, touch-down!" hurtled from the stands. Three yards for a touch-down, and——

The teams untangled their close-locked limbs, scrambled for place, and the whistle blew for time. The Harvard end could not rise. He got to his knees, crept forward on all-fours a body's length, then pitched face downward into a pool of water that would have drowned him in fifteen seconds had not his team-mates pulled his limp form out of the mire and carried him, a sodden weight, to the side-lines.

Jacintha Bruce saw the new end break from the blanket-swathed row of squatting substitutes by the Harvard rail and race madly out to the waiting battle-line. He ran with the suggestion of a limp, but with a springy, catlike elasticity. She saw the crouching lines stiffen, heard faintly the far-off calling of the quarter-back's numerals, and then the whole Yale team seemed to bunch and go surging, an irresistible wave of beef and sinew, upon this as yet untested factor in the game. The half-back with the ball, swiftly skirting the flank of his charging forwards, shot along toward a patent gateway in the seemingly broken defense, when, like a crimson flame, a figure darted out from the ruck of thrusting bodies, and hurled itself in a swift panther-leap upon the fleeing runner. So fierce and sustained was the shock of the attack that the trapped runner was lifted clear off his feet and sent crashing into the turf, the water-softened condition of which alone saved him a broken neck, for he fell on the points of his shoulders, turned a complete flip-flop, and lay pinioned by Jack McDunn's prehensile arms.

It was now Harvard's turn to split the sky, for a second-substitute end had saved her from a threatened touch-down by as brilliant a piece of defensive work as the day had so far uncovered.

And now Jacintha, her loyal Yale heart beating a throbbing protest, saw what real leadership could do in a pinch. Harvard for the first time in the game assumed the offensive. McDunn's wonderful defense of his position in a crisis put new heart into his fellows, and not only that, his presence on the field seemed to stimulate them by the force of example. Said Lancey Keane:

"That's Jack McDunn, and he's a wonder. I've seen him play. I don't see why they didn't put him in before; maybe they're afraid of him. Last year he was an awful welcher. . . . Oh, look at that

punt! . . . Hang on to it, Si! Oh, Si, Si, that's three times! . . . Holy goat, that's McDunn! . . . Get him, Leo, nail him——"

Lancey groaned in company with fifteen thousand other followers of the blue, a great rain-soaked, despondent groan, for the diabolical McDunn, racing well down under his full-back's long, twisting drive, was right on top of Si Jones, the Yale quarter, who missed his catch as he had already missed two previous attempts. He dived frantically after the slippery, treacherous thing, but McDunn, poised for his spring, lunged groundward as Ty Cobb steals second, and slid like an eel past the Eli quarter. The ball was Harvard's on Yale's forty-yard line.

The teams were up and crouching again, the ball snapped, and the Harvard full-back went staving into the stubborn blue line, only to be thrown back with a loss. Again came the signal for attack, but McDunn held up his hand, and Seaburn, the Harvard captain and quarter, rose and stepped out of the line-up. McDunn walked over to him, threw an arm across his shoulder, and spoke vehemently in his ear. Seaburn shook his head, whereupon the forty thousand could see that McDunn grew angry. It was as if he were saying, "You blankety-blank idiot, do as I tell you!" His square jaw protruded brazenly under the nose of his captain, his fists whipped the air in quick, determined half-circles, his big shoulders working with the intensity of his argument; and presently Seaburn, not without a trace of sullenness, but with a nod of understanding, went back into the line, while Jack trotted out to his station on the right flank and set himself for the signal.

"Darned if I'd stand it," growled Lancey. "Think of a substitute bossing his cap—— . . . Look out, Dave, look out! . . . Oh, glug! He did it, he did it!"

For the Yale end opposite McDunn, playing far out, came in a fraction of a second too late, caught McDunn's iron elbow between chin and breast-bone, and toppled crashing on the back of his neck. His assailant, recovering like a tiger, plunged into and through Yale's charging line, while the half with the ball slid smoothly into his wake, cleared the ruck, and was off for a fifteen-yard gain before the secondary defense could penetrate to his flying legs.

The Harvard stands burst into one continuous volley of vengeful cheers as the crimson backs gained two more first downs on plays that McDunn's wonderful offense made possible. The Yale cohorts rose and in frenzied thunders abjured the line to stand fast.

"Hold 'em, Yale, hold 'em!" they roared, half in petition, half in command. The team obeyed for one down, but on the next play they saw a Harvard back start with the ball for McDunn's end, and, determined to smother a manœuvre already thrice successful, the entire line went tearing to the aid of their endangered flank to foil the man who had

turned the tide. But McDunn was not there. Instead of attacking his man as in the previous plays, he fainted once, then turned and skirted his own line, met the advancing back, and, accepting the skilfully passed ball, slipped around the left, where, under cover of his left end, half and full backs, he cleared the coveted yards and squirmed over the line under a swiftly augmenting burden of precipitated blue jerseys.

To Jacintha Bruce, perched high up on the vast Yale cliff, all this was veriest tragedy, with the villain triumphant over innocence and purity. To her, as to the many thousands of fellow Eli sympathizers, Jack McDunn became an obsession, a nightmare. Like them she prayed to the struggling, resisting men of Yale to "Get him; get McDunn," in a voice that was lost in the tumult of fierce exhortation from those about her. At one time she thought that her prayer had been answered, for once when Yale sent her crushing attack against Harvard's right, and failed to gain, the dissolving pile of human members disintegrated into its component individualities to leave a prone figure ground seemingly flat into the watery mire. It was McDunn, who, when his teammates pulled him promptly up and set him on his feet, as promptly crumpled back to earth again, and crouched there writhing in no simulated pain. But he was up again, amid the maniacal cheers of his now-unbalanced admirers, and, after a few halting steps, took his place in the re-forming line, and smeared the very next play, which the Yale quarter had mistakenly intended for a knockout.

"Who said McDunn was a welcher?" she sadly demanded of Lancey Keane, and that commentator answered dolefully:

"Not I, Jack, not I."

CHAPTER III

AND Harvard won, by a score which will be remembered distinctly by those who saw the game, and is of no consequence to those who did not. The great throng poured down from the cement slopes, oozed out at the gates of Soldiers' Field, and was soon spreading off in all directions, like a liquid freed by the breaking of a dropped vessel. The Bruce party, borne on the flooding tide that followed Boylston Street to the square, presently found themselves cast up at the door of a Gold Coast club, where rescuing friends wrought for their resuscitation with tea and biscuits. There were mostly Harvard people, who politely suppressed all overt signs of any possible tendency to gloat, and dispensed succor with hospitable grace.

Jacintha found Medford Crane, a boyhood crony whom her influence had not kept from a Harvard prep school and the eventual obloquy of Harvard matriculation. They sought a corner of the library, where Jacintha voiced her poignant anguish in near-sobs for the edification of her companion.

"Oh, Medford, was n't it just fierce!" she exclaimed.

"It sure was fierce," he agreed, grinning cold-bloodedly.

"Don't gloat!" she protested. "I didn't gloat last year, you know."

"That's right, Jack, you did n't gloat; oh, no, indeed!"

"Gloat if you want to, then, little beast! You haven't had a chance before."

"I swear I'm not gloating, Jack. I sympathize, truly. I'm the most magnanimous of men. I——"

"Men! Heaven help us!" piously ejaculated the girl. "Tell me, Medford Crane, who is this great Jack McDunn? Do you know him well?"

"Oh, so, so," he fenced. "He's one of the Western crowd. I can't say I'm exactly intimate with him. Good fellow, I guess."

Jacintha eyed young Crane narrowly.

"What's the matter with him?" she demanded. "Are you jealous of him? Is n't he——"

"Nobody in college is jealous of him," parried Crane. "He is—oh, he's all right, only he is n't exactly—that is——"

"You mean," cried Jacintha—"you mean he is n't your kind. He is n't from an old Boston family. He can play football, but otherwise he does n't fit. Am I right?"

"Oh, I don't know; maybe. Yes, he does n't fit, that's it."

"Snob!" accused Jacintha.

"Nothing of the sort," protested Crane. "You don't understand. I'm no knocker. He played a great game, and he won for Harvard. I'm properly grateful, and I yelled 'McDunn!' as loud as the rest. Do you think I'm such a dog, such a cad, that I'd knock a man who did what Jack McDunn did? I admire him, I tell you, but I don't know him well enough. Second place, he is n't a proper person for you to know. Now, you've made me say it."

"Fiddlesticks!" she cried, and marched off in a huff.

Yale to the core, Jacintha nevertheless had to admit that she had never seen so good a game of football. She was too fair-minded to allow partisanship to dim her appreciation of the high sporting spirit displayed by the Crimson. And as for McDunn, how could so magnificent an exhibition fail to strike deep, vibrant chords of admiration?

She wanted to meet and know him, to shake his hand, to tell him frankly just what she thought of him. She wanted to see what he looked like at close range. There was a certain individual swing of his shoulders that had made an indelible impression upon her, but whether he were ugly as sin, or an Apollo in mufti, she had no idea. She did n't know whether his eyes were brown or blue, his nose straight and fine or upturned and pugilistic. She suspected the latter. Some-

how, she never could get any satisfaction from the newspaper snapshots, and if they printed better portraits of McDunn she failed to see one. But she could not help forming an image of him in her mind's eye, which, so far as facial identification went, would surely prove a failure if put to the test.

There seemed to be little chance that she would ever have opportunity to compare her mental picture with the real McDunn. Medford Crane said he was not the kind of young man she ought to know; but this only heightened her curiosity. McDunn was rather young to be bad; he might be reckless and indiscreet, but Jacintha knew too much about the average man to give Medford's priggish prohibition a great deal of weight. She was altogether unlikely to find any one who would bring McDunn to see her, and Jacintha certainly could ask such a favor of but few and hold her self-respect.

So it turned out that she went back to Washington with her father disappointed, not alone in the outcome of the great game, but sharply unsatisfied in her failure to realize a wish which under ordinary circumstances would not have gone long unfulfilled. For Jacintha Bruce to express a desire to meet some one was usually but one step removed from the beginning of the acquaintance so sought. This exceptional situation, far from proving the rule, seemed to knock it galley-west.

The fall and winter passed, and Jacintha occasionally saw Jack McDunn's name in the newspapers. She followed the sporting pages with discriminating interest. McDunn came out for baseball in the spring, and developed into a heavy-hitting batter and reliable outfielder of 'varsity calibre. The season wore on and the important games were played, all with vast credit for Harvard, and with scarcely less for McDunn. Jacintha found it impossible to see any of these games, for Senator Bruce wanted her with him in Washington at the end of the session. She had fallen into the habit of doing certain things for him, and while he would have given her cheerful leave for a visit in New England, Jacintha felt that even a day's absence might cause serious inconvenience at a time when important committee work claimed sixteen out of every twenty-four hours.

If McDunn, who had never heard of Jacintha Bruce, had only known it, he was the recipient of a handsome compliment, in the fact that such a girl took interest enough in him to check up his athletic exploits in the newspapers from day to day, and to wish heartily that he were a Yale man. Then came her disillusionment.

The story "broke" soon after commencement week, when McDunn had been more in the public eye as a member of the victorious Harvard baseball team than at any time since the previous autumn. He had played a masterly game, "hitting 'em where they ain't," and fielding his position with marvellous accuracy. The sporting writers freely

predicted the baseball captaincy for him, and if any of these knew the inside reasons precluding such a choice, they kept them out of print. Another and less brilliant player was elected.

Jacintha Bruce found this a distinct disappointment. She was actually disgusted with herself for taking so keen an interest in the situation. When she learned that McDunn had failed of election as leader, she complained bitterly in a letter to young Medford Crane:

I have been reading about the baseball election, and I must say you "Hayvuds" make me tired. I remember your utterly priggish remarks about Mr. McDunn after the game last fall. At Yale, let me tell you, merit would not be ignored and snubbed by snobbishness. As a sporting proposition, Medford, Harvard iss nix. I know that is n't ladylike, and probably you would say to me, "It is n't done, you know." Heaven help us! Must the men have all the red blood?

All of which made poor Medford Crane, who admired Jacintha extravagantly, gnash his teeth in futile exasperation at the unreasonableness of women.

And then, as I said, the story "broke" which set half the country—the half that follows athletics—in a turmoil of protest and disappointment. Perhaps you yourself remember the details; if not, they are too painful for rehearsal. There was no excuse for McDunn. A big athlete, like any other public character, owes something to the public. He owes more to his college than to all else, but with thousands of young men and boys watching his every move it behooves your athlete to live a life that will bear scrutiny. Usually he does, and the admirable example of self-restraint and wholesome moderation set by him serves a useful purpose.

Jack McDunn chose to ignore this obligation. He had fought on the field for the honor of his college; he had been there with the "*morituri salutamus*" thing, so far as the public was concerned; but it never occurred to him that his obligation was a deeper one. In the eyes of many, he, Jack McDunn, stood for Harvard—stood for Athletics—and when he, Jack McDunn, blew up with a loud report, Harvard and her Athletics blew up too.

Anyhow, that was the way the faculty looked upon the matter, and they acted accordingly. The powers-that-be in amateur athletics, however, have no license to interfere in a man's private affairs so long as he violates no rule of the game, and McDunn was untainted as an amateur, and as a contestant fair in every department where his prowess gave him prominence. An easy-going public would forgive him next fall if he should provide them with his usual brand of thrills; otherwise they would forget him. He chose to let them forget him, and made no effort to reinstate himself at Cambridge.

Jacintha Bruce was forced, when she read the newspapers' accounts of McDunn's escapade, to acknowledge that she had been wrong. Medford Crane had said truly that McDunn was not worthy of her acquaintance. She promptly admitted that such a person ought not to expect any consideration when the matter of a team-captaincy was under discussion. Athlete or no athlete, a man who stands for Harvard or Yale or any other college in a position of importance must, first of all, be a gentleman. And McDunn certainly was not a gentleman.

Jacintha refused to admit, even to herself, how deep a disappointment she felt in McDunn's failure to live up to her expectations. She had clung to the belief that she should meet and know him some day, and find in him those qualities of sportsmanship and manliness of which his conduct on the football field gave evidence. Now, however, she realized that the decencies of life forbade her thinking of him. She was glad he was n't a Yale man, anyhow.

CHAPTER IV

ON the third day of September Jack McDunn walked up Washington Street, in Boston, with just sixty-four cents in his pocket. His summer had been a profitless one. Out home he had been received with scant cordiality. So long as he had done well in one thing, even though it be that which his practical father regarded in the light of mere play, the old gentleman had been willing to overlook certain lapses, in the hope that the indomitable spirit of the McDunns would in time show itself in something besides athletic success, and eventually make a man of Jack. But now he abandoned hope, for the boy's disgrace had swept away all confidence in the future. At the end of a few weeks the two found that association meant greater and greater friction. In fact, Jack's visit ended in a violent quarrel and an established breach between them, which the boy's mother weakly and vainly sought to heal.

Jack was no longer a boy, but a man, of age and legally responsible for his own actions and his own debts. Daniel Tresperson McDunn reminded him of this, pointedly and with decision. Unless Jack should demonstrate by a continued line of conduct which the elder McDunn should approve as worthy of something better than an overgrown hulk of bone and muscle, a big engine without a governor, he proposed to wash his hands of him. He gave Jack a thousand dollars and told him flatly that his displacement assayed higher than his hull in actual negotiable value, so far as Daniel's estimate could determine.

Jack took the check, scanned it contemptuously, and tore it into small pieces, which he insolently sent flurrying about his father's ears, like a stage snowstorm. Then he kissed his broken-hearted mother and shook the dust of Kalamawassett from his shoes.

He hoboed his way eastward, choosing such companions on the road as chance might offer or vicissitude impose. He joined with a circus as a canvasman, accepted a position passing patent-medicine booklets for a distributing firm, applied his skill and strength to the furniture-juggling problems of a moving-van concern. Between these frequently changing jobs he sought sedulously to reduce the visible supply of brewed and distilled commodities wherever he found himself. He rode the bumpers, pounded tie and pavement, stole chickens, and slept in barns, haystacks, and empty box-cars. His general trend was eastward, and he beat his way against the head-winds of adversity like a windward-bound ship, making long tacks or short hitches, as the gale might dictate.

Once arrived in Boston, he could have looked up his former cronies who were still in college across the Charles, but in the dilapidated state of his wardrobe pride forbade it. So he walked aimlessly along the street, his ship apparently arrived in a harbor where all desirable anchorages were preempted by more favored craft.

Jack McDunn could not have told himself in any definite way just why he had come to Boston. Lately it had looked more like home to him than any other town of his acquaintance; but now that he found himself at his journey's end, circumstances robbed the city of any very tangible homelike aspect. Instead of renewing the ties of acquaintance-ship here, he actually shrank from contact with those who knew him in his prosperous days. Professional athletics, a place on a league team, held possibilities for him, he knew; but he was badly out of training, slowed up by self-indulgence, and mentally unfitted for any attempt to realize upon his physical assets. No manager would give him a hearing; he looked too much the part he had played all summer: the bum, the down-and-out.

One cannot live high or long on sixty-four cents. Plainly he must find work of some kind, or stop eating. Jack applied listlessly at a few wholesale houses, but his appearance was against him. By the end of the afternoon he had made no progress. He bought a *Globe* and, going into the first convenient saloon, sat down at a table and ordered a drink, while he spread open the paper at the classified pages and scanned the male-help advertisements without any great interest. Perhaps he had become too thorough a tramp to care whether he found work or not. Winter was yet afar off, and the open country, with its unguarded hen-yards, orchards, and cornfields, had a far stronger appeal for him than a bale-hook and the callosities of honest toil.

His first drink demanded a second, and in an hour he had spent his money in return for the dubious comfort of partial intoxication. He went out into the street, and wandered aimlessly along the town, wondering vaguely where he should get a meal or a chance to sleep.

The time was just between the cessation of commercial business and the beginning of the evening's theatre-going, café-seeking affairs. McDunn turned, for no special reason, into Essex Street and wended toward the South Station. Suddenly his attention was caught by several men running, and he heard shouting somewhere down the street. If there were any good cause for excitement, he required to know what it was, and fell into a quick trot. At the corner of Oxford Place a small but rapidly augmenting mob had gathered, the centre of which milled and swirled with hatless heads and swinging fists. A policeman came running up and plunged into the crowd. Jack fell into his wake, and immediately found himself in the midst of a well developed young riot.

Half a dozen toughs were trying to beat up a big man who seemed to make very definite objections to the proposition.

"Hi, there, quit that!" roared the cop. He drew his club and laid about him in defense of the thug-beset wayfarer; whereupon the toughs divided their attention between their original victim and the officer. One of them went after the would-be rescuer with a rock, and opened a neat seam over his right eye. The cop, dazed but dogged, seized his assailant by the collar and continued to ply his club to some effect, but Jack saw that, unassisted, both the men must fare ill.

Six drinks of whiskey may not constitute good training diet, but they serve their purpose where recklessness and the primitive impulses of a free fight hold sway. Jack plunged into the mix-up with a howl of delight. His big fists went crashing into the faces of the attacking roughs, and, fighting with both hands and feet, he lent aid where aid was most needed. The beleaguered cop, thus abetted, found a hand to place whistle to lip, and as it shrilled its penetrating call he seized a second bully by the neck, still holding tenaciously to the first.

Backed against a brick wall, with the policeman between them, Jack and the big man who had drawn the first attack beat off those who now centred their efforts upon the rescue of their comrades from the iron grip of the law. But the battle must needs be brief, for Oxford Place presently swarmed with bluecoats, at sight of whom many of the gangsters turned and fled. Five, however, fell into the toils, and with these Jack and the big stranger were bundled into a patrol wagon and rushed off to the Lagrange Street station.

As the clanging vehicle rolled through town, followed by a kite-tail of curious small boys, McDunn managed to get a look at the individual who seemed to have been the cause of all the trouble. He was tall, heavy-set, and almost as dark as a negro. But his straight, coarse black hair, thin lips, and high-bridged nose showed plainly that he was no African. The big cheek-bones, one of which showed a livid bruise, were too characteristic to leave Jack long in doubt—the man was an Indian. Then, along with his race, his identity likewise flashed upon McDunn.

He had seen him before, on the football field—had played opposite him in the game with St. Botolph College, a year before. The big Indian was Tom Soccabasin, of the Penobscots, whose name stood for something momentous in college athletics.

At the police station the work of booking the prisoners proceeded with businesslike despatch. As the last of the five gangsters was led off downstairs to the cell-room, the desk sergeant looked up with a peremptory "next."

"I donno about bookin' these guys," spoke up the officer who had figured most prominently in the recent mêlée.

"Well, did n't you arrest 'em?" asked the desk man.

"I ain't so sure," said the patrolman. "You see, Sergeant, it was like this. I was comin' up Essex Street when I see a mob collectin' at the corner of Oxford Place. I starts to run up, and this man here"—indicating McDunn—"he come along behind me. This other man—this Injun, he looks like—he was standin' off half a dozen o' this Fort Point crowd, puttin' up a pretty fair fight at that. I butts in right off, when Reddy the Mink lays my head open with a hunk o' cobble, an' at that this white fellah he jumps in and puts up the finest scrap you ever seen in your life. 'F't had n't been for him, I'd 'a' fared pretty bad, I can tell you. He's got an awful breath on him, an' I s'pose he may be drunk, or a hobo, but I ain't for holdin' him after what he done for me. An' the Injun here, he's some scrapper, too, but I don't see nothin' to hold him for. He was only defendin' himself."

"What's your name?" asked the desk sergeant.

"Tom Smith," answered the Indian.

"Where do you live, Tom?" was the next question.

"Milo Junction, Maine," said Soccabasin.

"Been drinkin'?"

"Some."

"How'd you get into this fight?"

"I was in a saloon on Essex Street. I bought a round of drinks. I had some money—bills. When I came out a couple of loafers followed me. There at the corner where we had the fight they stopped me and asked for a match. I put my hands in my pockets to find one, and they both landed on me. That's how the fight started."

"What's your occupation?" asked the sergeant. "I saw a football player once that looked just like you."

"Football? Huh!" grunted the Indian. "I'm a log-driver. Sometimes I guide. I come up here the other day——"

"Never you mind the rest," said the officer at Soccabasin's side. "He didn't ask you any more questions. You better not talk too much."

"What's your name?" demanded the desk sergeant of McDunn.

"John Smith," promptly replied Jack.

"Smith? Smith? Where 've I heard—oh, yes. This is your brother Tom, ain't it?"

The policemen all laughed; even Soccabasin smiled faintly, while Jack grinned like a guilty schoolboy.

"Place o' residence, John?" went on the sergeant.

"Milo Junction, Maine," lied Jack.

"River-driver?"

"Yep."

"Guide?"

"M-h'm."

"Well, boys, if Officer O'Connor, who brought you in, says not to hold you, I won't. I guess you 're both drunk enough to enter a complaint against, but—well, all our rooms are taken. That right, O'Connor?"

"Suits me, Sergeant."

"Now, I'll tell you what I'm goin' to do," went on the desk man. "There's a train leaves for down in Maine at eight-forty-five, North Station. You boys have both been drinkin', and I don't want you to drink no more. If you do, you'll get in trouble and be locked up, and I don't want to see that happen. If you promise me that you'll both hop that train and get out of Boston without taking another drink, I'll let you go without booking you. I might hold you as witnesses, but I guess we've got enough on those guys without you."

Soccabasin looked at Jack, and McDunn returned the look.

"I don't know how my friend——"

"Brother," corrected the sergeant.

"How my brother feels," went on Jack. "I'd be glad to oblige you in this matter, but, to tell you the truth, I'm broke. I have n't the price of a ticket to Millinocket Junction."

"You mean Milo Junction," said Officer O'Connor, tenderly touching his finger-tips to his sore brow.

"Milo," repeated Jack.

"How about you?" asked the desk man, indicating the Indian.

"Me?" he answered. "Oh, I have money—money enough for two."

"That settles it—you're your brother's guarddeen from here to Maine. Get me?"

"Uh-huh!" grunted Soccabasin.

"That's all right, then," concluded the sergeant. "Good-night, boys."

"Good-night, boys, good-night," cried Officer O'Connor. "I'll shake hands with ye. Ye're a swell pair. An' here's a couple of dollars for ye, Jawn. I owe ye more'n that for the help ye give me. Good-night, fellahs, an' good luck to ye."

CHAPTER V

McDUNN and the big Indian walked slowly up Tremont Street to the subway. Neither said anything for some time. Then Jack began:

"I'm not going down to Maine with you, Soccabasin."

"How do you know my name's Soccabasin?" demanded the Indian.

"Because I'm Jack McDunn," replied the Harvard man.

"That's right, that's right," agreed Soccabasin. "So you are. I've been trying to get your number all evening. Say, but you must be up against it as hard as I am—or worse."

"I'm up against it, all right," said Jack. "But I've got two dollars. That'll see me through till I get a job, or hike out of town."

"Are n't you afraid you'll get run in?"

"Not if I cut out the booze."

"You can't cut it out," warned Soccabasin.

"Well, I'm going to try. How about you?"

"I'm going to obey orders," assured the Indian. "I've got enough. This noble-red-man business has ruined me. I'm going back where I belong and get a job logging or guiding."

"I thought you were playing professional ball," said Jack.

"I was, but I got canned off the team for drinking and insubordination. There is n't a club in the league wants me. I got my pay and an unconditional release two weeks ago, and I've just about enough left to last until I get back to Old Town. You'd better come along."

"What good would I be in the woods? I can't use an axe. I know the country, though. I've hunted all over, from Megantic to 'Dobsis. It must look pretty good about now."

"You come along with me," urged Tom. "I'm only an Indian, but I can do you a good turn. Folks know me down home. Maybe you can go to guidin'—anyhow, it would be a cinch to get you a job in a logging camp. The life is n't bad if you like outdoors."

Jack looked at him speculatively.

"I call you a white man," said he. "Nobody has treated me like this for months—not even my own father. He's sore on me. You knew about my leaving college?"

"I read about it—some."

"All you read was true, I guess, and more. I've been a fool. The funny part of it is, I don't seem to want to be anything else. I'm no good. I was born for a hobo, I guess."

"You come along with me," repeated the Indian. "I've got enough for the tickets."

"I'll go with you," said Jack. "If I get up in the woods and do some hard work, I'll likely straighten out. My old man owns a piece of timber-land up there as big as all of this state, I guess."

"It is n't what your old man owns," said Soccabasin. "It's how good a man you are that counts with those fellows. Come on. It's eight now, and the train goes at eight-forty-five."

They went into the tunnel and took a North Station car. After Tom had bought their tickets to Maine, he said:

"Come on, McDunn; I've got a little left, and you've a couple of seeds. Let's go get a drink."

"No," said Jack.

"Why not?"

"We promised we would n't drink in Boston."

"What's the odds?" queried Tom. "They'll never know. I'm dying for a snifter. Have n't had a thing for two hours or more. Are n't you thirsty?"

"Crazy," said Jack. "But, just to show I'm a good sport, I keep that promise; you can do as you like. Besides, I'm superstitious. I've a hunch if I keep my word my luck's going to turn."

"Well," agreed Soccabasin, a little downcast, "if that's the way you feel about it, I'll compromise with you. I won't drink in Boston, but we'll buy some booze to take with us."

"You're on," said Jack.

As the train pulled out of the shed, Tom and Jack, in the smoker, pried the cork out of a quart bottle, and as long as the whiskey lasted they sat and grew more and more friendly and confidential. They rehearsed college football experiences, baseball, the track; the fun they had had out of training, the triumphs gained by hard work. Late in the night, after the train had left Portland, Tom fell foul of a stranger with another quart, and along toward morning, having located certain points of difference, he fought bitterly and bloodily with said stranger until Jack McDunn restored peace by licking them both. Quiet settled down only when both Tom and Jack fell asleep in their seat, much to the relief of the train crew, who had laid plans to quell the riot with emergency axes.

Next morning the oddly matched pair left the train at Bangor and sought out a dealer who knew Tom and supplied Jack with an outfit of woodsman's clothing "on tick." Returning to the station, they boarded a train for Old Town, the home of Tom's tribe.

The Penobscot reservation occupies an island which divides the swift waters of the river at a point just above the city. Here dwell the last remnants of what was once a fine old clan of American aborigines. The houses are small and white-painted, there is a tiny Catholic church, and the village bears a surface resemblance to almost any small New England country community. The men log, hunt, build a few canoes, and sell the baskets which the womenfolk of the tribe manufacture by hand with skill and taste.

Here came Jack McDunn and Tom Soccabasin, on a forenoon in late summer, ferrying across the river in a lumberman's bateau. They were hardly sober, certainly sick with the effects of much whiskey, but glad to escape from the vicious eddies of saloon and dive, into the wholesomer atmosphere of this frontier to the Maine wilderness. As the two climbed out of the boat at the island landing, Jack said:

"Tom, I've come down here with you to get away from the things that have put you and me on the bum. I want you to promise me one thing: don't tell any one my real name. Hereafter I'm Jack McQuinn, woodsman, lumberjack, hunter, guide, gum-picker—anything you like—but not John Tresperson McDunn until I'm a man again, and maybe not then. That's a long way off, I'm afraid."

He turned and waved a comprehensive hand in the general direction of Boston and the world.

"It's all off now. Good-by, civilization. Not any more for mine!" And Tom Soccabasin grunted assent.

CHAPTER VI

THERE is a time in the Maine woods with a charm beyond that of the regular hunting season, when the men of the cities have dismissed their guides and trekked back to the railroad and the Pullmans and so once more to the haunts of trust, trolley, and table d'hôte. Only the wise know this, and not all the wise. With the end of fall and the onset of winter come the arctic silence and the snapping arctic cold, the season of fast-locked river and lake, of frozen sap, of crisp, biting air purer than all other material substance, of solitude and of peace. Later the great snows sift in between the close-set trees, and for long months the white solitude envelops mountain and marsh, hill, trail, and valley, in a seamless fabric of feathers and steel.

Only here and there in the enormous acreage of northern Maine are scattered the lumber camps along the rivers and brook-beds, from which men with axe and saw weave along the ridges and slopes, cutting out pine, fir, spruce, and hemlock trees and yarding them up in huge piles ready for the spring drive. A literature has grown up—a bibliography of pine and poplar, of track and trail, of lumber and lumbermen. This is but one isolated episode of the snowy wilds, whereby some lives, unnative to that solitude, were moulded and marked with the everlasting impress of the pine-tree winter.

Jacintha Bruce realized that there is something better worth while than a chance shot at an animal little more difficult to kill than a domestic sheep. As a sporting proposition—and she judged most things in life on that basis—killing deer appealed to her but slenderly. True, she had brought down her buck, and his graceful head with its spreading

antlers had excited plenty of comment among the guests at her father's Washington home. But she had little desire to kill a second, and refused repeated opportunities to do so in her frequent visits to Maine. There were exploits that appealed to her sporting instincts much more strongly. She was expert with the camera, and prouder of successfully made pictures than of any possible number of stuffed creatures.

"You see," she would explain, "it is much more difficult to get a good picture of a wild animal than it is to shoot him. Any one who can break a dinner plate at two hundred yards can pot a deer. That's nothing—even a militiaman could do it. What's the danger? Where's the sporting chance in it? But take a camera and spend a solid week manœuvring for a snap-shot of a cock-grouse, or a doe with her fawn, and see if it doesn't take endurance, and patience, and skill. Often there's danger, too. I nearly broke my neck getting my prize view of Mount Katahdin. It was a harrowing experience. But no one has ever duplicated the picture. Here it is—is n't it wonderful? And here's my *chef d'œuvre*—a buck deer only six feet from my lens. When the shutter snapped he jumped. So did I. If I had n't, I should never have lived to develop the film. Photographing a wild animal is a matter of feet; shooting is one of yards—hundreds of them. It's unfair to the beast, and it is about as exciting as bombarding a sofa-cushion with gum-drops. And then there are other things about the woods—the gorgeous walks, the mountains, the lakes—oh, what's the use! I can't describe it—the books are full of it, but you've got to be there to see it and feel it."

And so Jacintha's party stayed in Maine long after the law forbade further slaughter of the innocents. There were pictures that could be had only after a snowfall, and the first snowfall was yet to take place. The cold weather came on shortly, and what froze at night thawed promptly again when the sun got up. The big camp on Chipmonk Island, in Sixth Pistol Lake, looked out across a blue expanse of water unmanacled as yet by Jack Frost, although December was creeping past and Christmas growing nearer.

In Jacintha's party were Lancey Keane, young Doctor Jenness, and the Senator. No other woman had cared to come. Jacintha's sporting proclivities outran those of her feminine friends. But Jacintha did not miss them.

"I'd far rather we had n't any other girl along," she told her father. "Women are so tender. If Xenia or Molly Drake were with us, she'd probably sprain one of her delicate ankles, or get a cold in her throat, and I'd have to nurse her. That would be mighty disagreeable, I should say."

Her camp outfit was much like that the men carried. She packed a sizable bag containing such necessities as experience dictated—nothing more. And by "packed" I do not mean "filled"; I mean "*carried*."

She refused assistance with this piece of dunnage—it swung from her shoulders as did Lancey's or the heavier burden of her guide.

Jacintha's dress duplicated that of her companions. She wore loose fitting knickerbockers of heavy corduroy, a Mackinaw coat of screaming plaid, heavy woollen stockings, and high laced moccasins. She carried a camera instead of a rifle, and only in this single particular did her equipment differ from that of Lancey, or the Doctor, or her father. A woollen cap with a visor, and home-knitted mittens bought at the Milo village store, completed her costume. At one hundred yards you would have had no suspicion as to Jack Bruce's sex.

The house on Chipmonk was built after the traditional lumber-camp plan. Its log walls were six feet high, its ridge-pole not over ten feet from the floor of split logs. A big, hungry box-stove stood in the middle of the room, and at the front, toward one side, another wood-eater in the shape of a kitchen range served the demands of cookery. A plank table ran the length of the camp. There were six or eight chairs, a shelf for the water-pail, and a deacon-seat. Along the walls were buck-feet, up-bent, thrust between the logs, and these were as convenient for clothes-hooks as for arms-racks, and used for both. Around the funnel of the box-stove, which ran vertically through the roof of cedar "splits," a network of hay-bale wire was strung for drying clothing.

There were no bedrooms. The deacon-seat was made of an enormous cleft log, and extended across one end of the camp about seven feet from the back wall. Its flat side, perhaps twenty inches above the level of the floor, served as a seat whereon democratically might rest guest, guide, and cook. Behind the deacon-seat no flooring was laid, but the space was filled from the ground almost to the level of the seat with evergreen boughs. These, surfaced with straw confined in great ticks or mattresses, made a bed as wide as the width of the camp—say, thirty feet. Came the hour for retiring, and the cook wrapped himself in a blanket and turned in at one end. Next him slept a guide, then another, and another, and another. Dr. Jenness's place in the rank came next, then Lancey Keane's. Jacintha buttoned herself into a duck sleeping-bag with heavy blanket linings and slept between Lancey and the Senator, who occupied the extreme right-of-line. After a hard day of tramping and hunting, the chorus of snores from these nine throats was something alarming, sinister, elementally frank; if you will, brutal.

Occasionally, in the night, the cook crawled out of his blanket and thrust a log or two into the stove. At six he arose, lighted the lamps, and started the fire in the range with wood that crackled, while little wreaths of smoke leaked out around the covers and filled the room with fragrant blue haze. Soon the guides arose, slipped on their moccasins, and pattered out at the front door, stretching and yawning, to be presently followed by Lancey, Jenness, and the Senator. Jacintha

sat up in bed and arranged her hair, chatting meanwhile with the cook. After that she slid behind a screen in the corner for a matter of ten minutes or so. The cook kept about his business.

There was corn-bread for breakfast, and coffee, and apple-sauce with molasses in it, and fried salt pork, baked beans, mustard pickles, and sometimes fried hasty pudding with maple syrup. It was all over a little after seven, when the entire party split up and went its respective questing ways. Sometimes they came back for lunch, sometimes they took a cold "snack" along with them. At night came a square meal of hot saleratus biscuit, "deer-meat" stew, baked beans, apple-sauce with molasses in it, mustard pickles, and maple syrup. There was also tea in tin dippers, to which you might add condensed milk if you wished. All ate at once; there was no "second table." The cook served the meal, and slipped into his seat as soon as the rest were busy, hopping up every now and again to fill some one's tea-mug or to renew the supply of hot bread.

These were good evenings for Jacintha. Maine guides are famous jokers. All sorts of rough witticisms flew back and forth, digging personalities, sarcasms, and decriminations. Within the limits of decency, these verbal battles often waxed hot and furious. Jacintha, Lancey, and Jenness joined in the badinage, and occasionally the Senator himself would cut in sharply, although as a rule he preferred to enjoy the fun as a non-participant. After supper there were pipes, perhaps a game of pitch, a night-cap, and before nine o'clock the chorus of snores was once more in full swing. Jacintha and the guides stopped short of the night-cap. It is not a guide's business to drink; some of them do, but not usually when employed.

To Jacintha this simple daily life never lost the spice of interest. In the first place, there was the changing season—a continuous moving-picture show, indescribably colored, vigorously, vitally animated. Once in a long time some casual visitor from the outside world brought letters and papers. The letters interested Jacintha very little, the papers not at all. Her friends wrote her of their petty affairs—the doings of society, engagements and rumors of engagements, small gossip, scraps of a frippery egoism that seemed to Jacintha microscopically narrow. Perhaps some time, much later in the season, she would, on getting back to town, take notice of such things. Now they were too pygmyish for thought.

Four guides were employed by the Bruce party. Lon Spencer, a wiry little man with only one good eye, took care of the Senator. He and Sand Hoskin owned the camp. "Sand" was a marked "character," and his nickname was honestly earned and deservedly bestowed. Sand, who was a matter of forty-odd years old, took Lancey Keane in tow.

To Dr. Jenness fell the good fortune of having a real Indian guide—

Tom Soccabasin, of Old Town, a man whom Jenness had seen on the football field for St. Botolph's College. The doctor was as tickled as a hen with six chickens, and found Tom not only a surpassingly skilful woodsman but a congenial companion as well.

To Jacintha was allotted Jack McQuinn. Lon and Sand said they did n't know much about Jack, though he seemed to be reliable and honest, and a dependable guide. His great strength and wonderful agility picked him out as one man in a thousand. Tom Soccabasin had recommended him, and Tom was trustworthy. He told them that Jack was a "Bluenose" from over New Brunswick way.

"He don't egzactly talk like them down-easters, now, yit he has the same way o' rollin' an 'r' on his tongue every time he hits one, like it was a fresh chew," commented Sand.

"Everybody talks different, don't they?" queried Lon. "I'd never take that fellah fer no Bluenose, though. An' here's a thing 't happened t' other mornin'. I come in here sudden f'm ou'doors, an' Jack he's a settin' side o' the stove, cleanin' his 55-28. I had a idee—I says, loud an' quick-like, 'God save the king!' Jes' like that—'God save the king!' What d' yuh s'pose he done? He turned 'round kind of slow an' looked at me like I's crazy, 'n' then he says, s'e, 'What the devil king be you a-beefin' about, Lon?' Now, you know 't if he was a reel simon-pure Bluenose he would n't never done like that, would he?"

"He's a good guide, though, is n't he?" asked some one.

"He is, 'n' he ain't," replied Sand. "He's strong an' willin', he's got a good nose for home, an' I doubt if you could lose him in these woods; but he's got the funniest way o' handlin' a canoe—uses a kinder long, college-boy stroke, like they do up to Boston, out there on the Charles River, where all they do is float 'round and sing 'marilee we rool along,' an' hammer one o' them mandoleums. I'd like ter see one o' them willy-boys try to pole a canoe up four-mile rips—gosh!"

"I noticed he give you a pretty good tussle comin' up the lake t' other day in that gale," observed Lon slyly.

"Shucks!" said Sand. "I could tucker the liver out o' him in an all-day grind."

"Yes, you could, like a hen's eyebrow," said his partner, with exaggerated incredulity.

One thing was most noticeable about McQuinn: he murdered the English language with protracted and exquisite torture. None of the other guides could outscore him in the matter of double negatives or excel his conjugational atrocities. Even his fellow guides laughed at some of his grammatical eccentricities.

One morning at breakfast he stated:

"Honest, I hain't never nowhere tasted no biscuits ha-a-f so good's them is, nohow."

"Gosh, Jack," said Lon regretfully, "'s tew bad you can't git another 'no' or two in thar some place."

One night at the supper-table, Lancey Keane, who occasionally got by the ears with big Tom Soccabasin in matters footballistic, fulminated a dispute in regard to certain strategic points in the game.

"And I tell you this, Tom," declared the Yale ex-player: "there's one man who outshone you all at end."

"I know whom you mean," said Soccabasin quietly.

"You bet you do," insisted Lancey, who had had an extra nip out of the cocktail bottle before supper. "So do you, don't you, Jack?"

Since McQuinn's name was Jack, Jacintha had for the time discarded her nickname, and was usually addressed as she had been christened. Jack McQuinn and the girl both looked up at the question, and the man's face bore a look of almost terror-stricken chagrin.

"Yes," said Jacintha, "I know; but don't you dare speak his name here, Lancey Keane. Such a man is n't fit to be talked about among decent people—is he, Tom? Don't you consider him a disgrace to sport, and to college athletics in particular?"

The big Indian squirmed and parried.

"Well, Miss Bruce, all I can say is, he played a clean game. I would n't pretend to judge him. We all have our weaknesses, I'm afraid."

Remembering Tom's, Jacintha felt exceedingly contrite and uncomfortable. She would have liked to apologize to Tom, but feared to make matters worse. Presently Billy, the cook, passing around a pan of fresh biscuits, said:

"Biscuit, Senator? . . . Doc? . . . Mr. Keane? . . . Jack—well, I vum! D' any o' you see Jack go out? I thought he was here all the time."

Later in the evening Tom Soccabasin found opportunity to talk to Jacintha in a corner of the camp.

"Miss Bruce," he said, "I don't want you to be offended with me; but I knew Jack McDunn, and I hated to hear you speak so unkindly about him. I never heard you knock any one before. It is n't like you—you're too good a sport. Jack is n't as bad as he's painted—I wish you'd think a little better of him. If you ever saw him play football or baseball, you know a fairer player never wore spiked shoes. I'm not defending him altogether, you understand. But he was more of a fool than anything else, same as—same as some of the rest of us, Miss Bruce. I guess you know why I'm not playing ball this year. But if I weather the winter and live until the time comes to go south to training camp, you'll hear of me on the diamond next summer. And if I have luck I'm going to have Jack McDunn with me."

Jacintha held out a strong, boyish hand.

"Tom," she said soberly, "I'm sorry for what I said, both on your account and McDunn's. I'm sure you'll make good another season. And the winter in the woods will be the best thing in the world for you."

"I'm glad," said the great brown fellow, "that you're not like the man who said the only good Indian was a dead one."

CHAPTER VII

THE companionship between Jacintha Bruce and her guide, Jack McQuinn, was agreeable to Jacintha in many ways. In spite of his obvious and, sometimes it seemed to her, his almost studied crudities, he was not only intelligent in woodcraft, but possessed the sophisticated sense of humor that your backwoodsman, keen though he may be, always fails to develop. Little sarcasms, subtly turned phrases, nice distinctions and shades of meaning, brought response from McQuinn in the most unexpected ways. And yet he seemed to maintain at all times a guarded reserve with respect to himself. Let the talk drift around to his antecedents, and he either closed up like an oyster or adroitly switched the conversation to a track that suited him better.

In this way he constantly baffled Jacintha, so that she found him a problem, fascinating because unsolvable. Sometimes she caught herself wasting too much time wondering about him. There was something in his personality vaguely but insistently reminiscent. Oddly enough, she could not find this suggestive quality in his face; but again and again on the trail or when she followed him along a carry or tote-road, the haunting likeness to some one would confront her. What was it that could be conjured up by this man's back which his face failed to awaken?

There was no doubt of the utter magnificence of McQuinn's physique. His was the traditional beauty of the body—lean, thin-hipped, compact, catlike. His strength was the strength of a panther, never that of the ox. Tom Soccabasin was a big man—bulky of frame, large-boned, heavy-handed. By actual measurement, McQuinn nearly equalled Tom in height, yet so nicely was he proportioned that he would have passed for a much smaller man, and Tom seemed to outbulk him by many pounds.

"Jack," said the girl one morning, as they set out for a deer-run where Jacintha hoped to get within snapping distance of a particularly wary buck, "what makes you murder the king's English so?"

"Am I such a murderer?" asked the guide.

"Don't you know you hardly open your mouth without at least committing mayhem upon your mother-tongue?"

"That sounds legal," commented Jack with a grin. "What's the penalty?"

"It ought to be hard labor in a grammar reformatory," said Jacintha.

"Tough," said Jack. "I'll appeal the sentence and take my case up. May it please the Court, I hope Your Honor won't fix my bail too high."

"What do you know about appeals and bail, Jack McQuinn?" asked Jacintha.

"Read about 'em in some book. Did you ever read any of Shakespeare's works, Miss Bruce, or Laura Jean Libbey?"

"A little," said Jacintha.

"Well, excuse me for saying so, but you remind me of that there Portia, in a book that was wrote by Shakespeare, called 'The Storekeeper of Ven-ice,' or some such name."

"I do? In what way?"

"Well, in the first place, Portia done a man's work in man's clothes. And then you a-judgin' o' me and sendin' me up to some apothecarial jail——"

"What kind of jail did you say?" demanded Jacintha.

"Well, maybe it was an apotheosized jail—one o' them superstitious jails——"

"Do you mean a hypothetical jail, or a supposititious jail, Jack?"

"Yes, both o' them. It must be swell to have the English language roped, thrown, and branded like you——"

"What do you mean, Jack?" asked Jacintha. "I don't quite understand that expression."

"Well, I meant it must be fine to be able to drop a lariat over 'most any word you want and cut it outer the herd——"

"Jack!"

"Yes, 'm?"

"Do they rope cattle down east, in New Brunswick?"

"No, 'm—that is, yes, 'm. You see, they's a Wild Wes' show come to our town an' I seen them vaqueros or whatever you call 'em a-ropin' hosses and steers and sich, and I got int'rusted, so I read up a lot about life on the plains an' in the minin' country. Gosh, Miss Bruce, I'd like to go out West! I would if some o' these New England short-horns would grub-stake me——"

"Let me tell you something, Mr. Jack McQuinn," broke in Jacintha. "I'm suspicious of you. Your dialect is too mixed. I'm not saying anything to any one else, but you might as well understand you can't fool me any longer. You're not an Easterner—you are as Western as a spiny cactus. I've seen all kinds in Washington—one gets to judge origins by dialects."

"All right, Miss Portia. The prisoner at the bar pleads nolo, and throws himself on the mercy of the court."

"I'll put your case on file," said Jacintha judicially. "No more funny business now. Talk as you like when you are at camp, but please don't double up your negatives any more when we're alone."

"Anything else?" asked Jack meekly.

"No," said Jacintha. "When there is I'll let you know."

The man turned and led the way through the woods, and once more Jacintha saw that haunting, familiar, elusive something in the droop and swing of his broad shoulders.

At camp McQuinn continued to maltreat the English language most shockingly, and now that Jacintha had gained a share of his secret, even so meagre a portion, he seemed to her more than ever to delight in the procedure. Sometimes when he committed some particularly egregious blunder she would catch him watching its effect upon her out of the tail of his eye; and this finally grew rather disconcerting. Yet she hesitated to speak of it, lest she should further weaken her position. At first she had thought to gain a distinct advantage by disclosing to him her suspicions; but she now saw that the advantage in some way or other was on his side, and that she was the one to be embarrassed by the knowledge that he was not what he pretended.

She continued to find a distinct fascination in his company, because she knew that, should her father suspect McQuinn to be other than the roughest sort of backwoodsman, he would be likely to change the disposition of the party's guides.

Jacintha did not fear McQuinn. You can readily suppose that all sorts of suspicions would have been aroused as to his reasons for deception. But she felt instinctively that the man was honest. Whatever his reasons, she held steadfastly to the faith that he was not a fugitive from justice, or any sort of malefactor. Besides, here was a sporting proposition exactly to her taste. She could take care of herself; she was strong as few women are strong—stronger perhaps than the average man. This gave her confidence, poise, and fearlessness.

Suppose McQuinn should turn out some sort of undesirable, despite her instinctive feeling that he would not; what would the development be? Would it not be worth watching? Would it not, perhaps, involve an adventure well worth her participation? The sporting element was strong in the situation, and, that being the case, it was simply pie for Jacintha.

But something happened that went far to confirm her belief in McQuinn. She went with him on an all-day trip to Blue Cap Mountain, and took much longer than she should have done to get the views she wanted. Finding scant time to reach camp before dark, and fearing to alarm her father, she started with McQuinn to hurry down the mountain. Near the foot she did the very thing for fear of which she had refused to invite another to camp: Jacintha twisted her ankle—not

severely, it is true, but enough to cause her an agony of pain and to make the walk homeward a long-drawn-out misery.

Jack McQuinn proved himself in this dilemma a gentleman beyond all shadow of doubt. His chivalry was of the best, and his courtesy, flavored with a certain tactfulness, went far to soothe her pride, which was certainly as badly injured as the ankle. She knew that had she been an ordinary girl McQuinn would have picked her up and carried her most of the way to camp; but she saw that he knew she was n't the sort of girl who would stand for being babied. He kept his hands off, except at such times as he supposed help was absolutely essential. In brief, he treated her exactly as he would have treated another man under like circumstances. It was what he did n't do, far more than what he did do or might have done, that taught Jacintha to respect him, and to realize that whoever he might be, Westerner or Easterner, in jail or out, he was a man who could be trusted as only a gentleman and a thoroughbred could be trusted. And that night, although it was the bandaged ankle whose throbbing drove off sleep, the burden of her thoughts was of Jack McQuinn and that curious, suggestive swing of his shoulders which she felt would some day prove the sure clue to his real name and individuality.

CHAPTER VIII

ON the day following the injury, Jacintha found that the twisted ankle would bear her weight without much discomfort, although she walked somewhat gingerly about the camp, and under Dr. Jenness's orders kept indoors and off her feet during the next two or three days. She utilized these hours of inactivity for mending her clothes and for writing some long-overdue letters to her friends of the outside world.

McQuinn, finding spare time a drug, volunteered to trek out the twenty-odd miles that lay between Chipmonk camp and the nearest village. There were letters to mail and others to bring back. Tobacco was needed, as well as some minor articles of food or flavoring. So on the second day of Jacintha's enforced rest Jack dug his paddle into the waters of Sixth Pistol and drove his canoe off to the westward until it was lost to view behind a jutting wooded point. Dr. Jenness thought that Jacintha's ankle would be nearly well in two more days, and McQuinn agreed to be back at the end of that time.

The hours passed dully enough for Jacintha. She encouraged the men and guides to go about their daily quests. The hunting season was now past, and Lancey Keane and Dr. Jenness had both taken a leaf from Jacintha's book touching the matter of weapons, and followed trail or tote-road with snap-shooting intent, swapping carbine for camera.

"Piping times of peace, these," commented Lancey. "We've beaten the sword into the pruning-hook, Jackie, old scout."

"Yes," supplemented the Doctor, "we've beaten the ramrod into the tripod, so to speak. It's good fun."

"Then, I've beaten some sense into your heads," rejoined the girl maliciously.

"And I," chimed in the Senator, "have beaten the calibre into the calabash." He applied a match to his big, golden-brown pipe and filled the air with the tang of mellow burly.

"Inexpensive wit," nagged Jacintha. "Why the masterly inactivity, Father? Are n't you going to beat it with the boys? The beating seems unusually good this morning."

"I think I shall stay about camp this forenoon and keep you company, Jack."

"Oh, lovely!" cried Jacintha. "You may mend some of my stockings; and my forty-four needs cleaning."

"You encourage me, my dear," replied her father. He sat down by the stove and buried his nose in a month-old review. Jacintha, from long habit, held her tongue while her father read. Presently he dropped his paper and fell into a brown study.

"Penny," said his daughter.

"I was thinking about young McQuinn," said Bruce.

"Is that all?" asked Jacintha, closing the hole in a heel with a bit of yarn, pucker-string fashion.

"That's a funny way to mend," observed the Senator.

"It's easier than darning. I could n't do that with a big hole—it would bunch and make a blister. What else were you thinking about? The new finance bill?"

"Nothing so simple," he answered, smiling. "I was studying a human character."

"That sounds interesting. Whom were you using for your subject? Me? Lancey? Tom Soccabasin? President Wilson?"

"None of those. I was studying McQuinn."

"Really, Father? Do you find him puzzling, too? What do you make of him?"

"As yet, nothing at all definite. I might theorize no end, but it would n't get me anywhere. He is an amazing young man."

"In what way?"

"First of all, physically. I think I've never seen so perfect a human animal."

"He would make a wonderful athlete," said Jacintha. She considered herself a judge of athletic timber.

"You say 'would make.' I should say 'has made.' Let me tell you what happened yesterday. You know Jenness and I wanted to follow Molasses Brook, for Tom said there were sure to be deer, and the Doctor is itching to snap a buck that will match that picture you

got a year ago. I believe he's made some sort of bet about it with you, has n't he?"

"Only a dozen films," said Jacintha.

"Of course," said her father, "you'd have to make it what you call a 'sporting proposition.' You'll keep it up until you're ninety, I suppose."

"Surely," confirmed his daughter.

"Jack wanted to go with us; he'd nothing much to do about here, so we told him to come along. Around noon we got up to the head of Molasses, and, sure enough, there was the run, with tracks by the dozen, many of them hardly an hour old. There's no use in my giving Jenness away, I suppose, and you must n't let him know I told you, but he made an awful mess of things, poor fellow. Tom and Jack went one way, Lon another, proposing to make a wide circle in the hope that when the deer winded one of them, the animals would make for the water and likely enough come down the run.

"Sure enough, in about three-quarters of an hour Jenness and I, sitting snugly behind a stump, with a good strong sunlight at our backs, heard a rustling and thudding, and there came Mr. Buck as large as life and twice as handsome. He was n't much disturbed, just nervous and suspicious. He walked slowly toward us, head up, flag flickering warily, and in thirty seconds more he would have been within six feet of us. I could just catch him faintly in my view-finder when 'Hish-choo!' went Jenness over my shoulder. 'Hish-choo!'"

"No!" cried Jacintha.

"Yes," insisted her father; "that's just what he did. Of course our deer went off whistling like an amateur siren, and we never saw another all day. I scolded the Doctor properly, but he insisted that some one had put black pepper in his mittens. Mad? He was the maddest man you ever saw. I could n't find any pepper; there was n't a sign of it."

Jacintha laughed.

"Poor old Clinics," she pitied. "That's why he was so glum last night. He's certainly had hard luck this trip. Maybe I'd better take him with Jack and me and show him——"

"I was coming to Jack," broke in her father. "We had to make some sort of lame excuse to the guides, of course, for at least two of them, Tom and Lon, had seen the deer, and they knew he was headed down the run. But we got by some way, and presently we felt hungry, so we made a fire and heated tea, in an open space in front of an old lumber camp. After lunch the boys, Tom and Jack, got scuffling. It was all in fun, but pretty rough. Tom looks far larger than McQuinn, but you'd have been surprised to see how closely they were matched. They wrestled and tumbled about like a couple of young bears for half

an hour. Finally Jack, who appeared to be the more excited of the two, said he would bet Tom a week's pay that he could n't touch a certain tree at the end of the clearing, maybe one hundred and twenty-five yards off, and Tom took him up. Jack was to give a handicap of five yards. The Doctor was judge at the finish, and I acted as starter.

"They took off their Mackinaws, and Tom set himself as a sprinter does for the 'hundred'; but Jack just crouched, ready to spring like a panther. I counted three, and Tom was off with the word—I'd swear he was ahead of my 'go,' but not enough so that I could check it."

"That's part of the game," said Jacintha.

"It was cleverly done," went on Senator Bruce, "and gave Tom an extra yard's advantage. But McQuinn was after him like a rifle-bullet. I thought Tom would win, when suddenly Jack left the ground and shot through the air in a long, diving plunge. I've seen a greyhound take a hurdle like that. He struck Tom midway between knee and hip and pinned him so neatly that he came to the ground with a crash like a falling tree, but with arm outstretched toward the goal. Jenness says his fingers were so near to grazing the tree-trunk that he actually was unable to decide the result of the contest, and called it a dead heat."

"Did n't they run it off?" cried Jacintha, her eyes sparkling.

"No," said the Senator; "I would n't let 'em. Did n't you notice how Tom limped last night, or see the bruise on McQuinn's cheek?"

"O-ho-o!" said the girl. "So that accounts for it."

"That accounts for it?" repeated the Senator. "What do you make of it, Miss Eli?"

"Football," replied Jacintha, without an instant's hesitation.

That afternoon the Senator went off with Lon, and once more left Jacintha to the entertainment of her own thoughts and the sometimes amusing garrulities of Billy the cook. Her mending was finished, and she sought what distraction for her ennui out-of-date papers might offer; but every now and then she caught herself staring off across the cold blue sheet of Sixth Pistol, and when the bottom of a column was reached she was not surprised to find that she remembered not an idea from the first line to the last. So she sat there in the early gathering dusk, thinking, thinking, until Billy came in, puffing and noisy, with a couple of rabbits newly taken from a string of snares he had laid at the far end of Chipmonk.

"Gettin' pesky cold, Miss Brewce, I c'n tell ye," he said. "I jest seen somethin' that 'minded me o' the time Freely Bowers run away from the rabbit, back on Chadburne's ridge——"

He wandered on in a rambling, disjointed narrative of local folk-gossip, to which Jacintha paid no attention. Meanwhile he rattled the stove-covers, and bustled about with supper preparations.

"I can't believe it!" finally ejaculated Jacintha, aloud.

"By gosh, Miss Brewce, it's jest as true as I'm a-stirrin' this mess o' flapjacks!"

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Billy," laughed the girl. "I was n't thinking of your story when I said that."

"Sho!" said Billy; then to himself, "That's a kind o' comercial gal, I anum! Don't b'lieve she heerd a thing I was a-tellin' of 'er!"

CHAPTER IX

JACK MCQUINN returned to camp just ahead of the first real snow-storm of the season. He had been gone four days, and, as Billy remarked to Jacintha the first day of her captivity, it was getting mighty cold. Jack left his canoe at the foot of the lane and came skating across the new black ice the three nights of zero temperature had spread thickly and smoothly over the lake surface. He brought letters and bacon and newspapers and tobacco and three pounds of saleratus, and a new pair of mittens that Jacintha had commissioned him to buy for her.

Jacintha, who was out for a walk on the lake just before dusk, had seen him afar off, a lithe, swallow-like figure skimming down toward her with the swoop of a bird. She was surprised to find how glad she was to see him. And that was odd, because, you see, she was a high-bred, cultured girl, the daughter of a Senator of the United States, while Jack McQuinn was only a licensed guide, a woodsman, rough, untutored, shaming his mother tongue every time he opened his lips. Just how absurd her pleasure at his coming might be, she herself did not realize; if she had sensed its incongruity, she would very likely have issued orders to pack up and quit Sixth Pistol. Then again, perhaps—who knows?

McQuinn's eyes sparkled with the vigor of the fresh, cold air, and with a deep and frank delight at meeting Jacintha first of all the Chip-monk party.

"Gosh!" he burst forth, grinding his heels into the ice and sweeping down upon her in a wide, twisting spread-eagle. "Gosh! I'm glad to see you, Miss Jacintha. 'T was mighty nice of you to come out to meet me, now, wa'n't it? Miss me much, hey?"

"Oh, not much," she replied airily. "I wish I could skate like you."

"All in a little practice," he returned complacently. "You could, I'll bet."

"Ever play hockey?" asked Jacintha keenly.

"Sure—well, we call it shinney 'round where I come from."

"Really?" said the girl, with a trace of irony.

McQuinn looked at her with a hint of suspicion in his eyes.

"Why?" he asked.

"Oh, nothing," she said. "You know they play it a good deal in some of the colleges. Have you the mail? And did you get my mittens?"

"Yessum," replied McQuinn. "I got 'em. One's red and one's blue. How'll that suit you, Miss Bruce?"

"If that's so," returned Jacintha, "you may turn right around and go back and change them."

Jack fished in his pockets and brought out sundry small packages.

"Here they be—are, I should say."

He produced the mittens, but with them something else—a half-pint flask, filled to the neck and tightly corked.

"What's that?" demanded Jacintha.

"Vinegar."

"It's liquor—whiskey," she said.

The man looked at the bottle soberly, turning it over and over in his hand. Then he pivoted and with a wide sweep of his arm sent it crashing with a jingle of splintered glass among the trees on the shore. After which he looked at Jacintha.

"I got that the first night I hit the village," he said. "I hope you noticed it was full?"

"Yes?" said the girl questioningly.

"I lugged that around in my pocket all the time I was gone. I could feel it against my hip with every step. Sometimes I would take it out and look at it; once I pulled out the cork with my teeth, and smelled the whiskey. Then I put back the stopper and hammered it home against a tree. Do you know what that meant, Miss Bruce?"

"I can guess, Mr. McQuinn," she said. "Why do you tell this to me?"

"Good Lord!" he burst out. "I had to tell some one. That's too big a thing to keep all to myself. Can't you understand?"

"Yes," said Jacintha; "I understand. I'm glad you told me if you felt that way—do you wish me to congratulate you?"

"I do," he cried, with more intensity than she had ever known him to express. "I do—and, what's more, I don't care whether any one else would congratulate me or not. If it were n't for you, I could n't have done it."

"Hush," said Jacintha. "What have I ever done? I'm not your guardian."

"Ain't you—I mean, are n't you?" he asked quizzically. "Maybe you don't know, now, maybe you don't know anything about that."

Jacintha turned and walked back to camp through the wintry, stinging twilight, the guide skating easily beside her. At the landing he kicked off his skates, and together they went up the path to the door.

That night Jacintha lay awake a long time, staring at the twinkling rays cast through the interstices in the box-stove upon the cedar-splits of the roof. It was n't her ankle that kept her awake, but her brain, busy with thoughts that swam and spun and spiralled with an odd, new disquiet. Presently she fell asleep and dreamed a strange, weird dream in which she saw a man and a girl standing in a bleak, waste place, very close together. The man's left arm was about the girl, and she saw his right swing wide and a glinting something hurtle in a long parabola among the pines.

"That," said the man, in a clear, firm voice, "is my past. I've fought it, and now it's gone."

There was a jingling, splintering crash as the thrown object disappeared in the branches, and Jacintha awoke, to hear Billy the cook, who was getting breakfast, say:

"There, goldarn my picter, that's the second tumbler I've busted this week!"

CHAPTER X

THE snow-clouds gathered in the night. By morning five or six inches had fallen, but the weather cleared again at daylight. A brand new world greeted Jacintha when she awoke to it, a world in disguise, cloaked and masked. She saw it as a delicate etching, a tracing in dark lines and splotches on a white ground. There were no longer any angles, but wonderful sweeps and curves. Every harsher outline had been modified and softened or subtly erased. Each leafless tree had borne overnight a rounded, feathery foliage which the earliest chance breeze would dislodge.

As the dawn grew, over lake, forest, and hill spread wondrous pale tints of pink, swiftly vanishing and cooling to icy blues, deepening into black shadow-patterns of tree and brake; and as the sun crept reluctantly up out of the southeast, and hung hesitant at the beginning of its low swing along the southern sky, the softer colors gave way to a dazzling glare, almost as painful to endure as the direct rays of the sun itself.

Nothing pleases a woodsman, either guide or guided, like the first snowfall. Every creature that moves leaves autographic record of its passage. Moreover, the thick snow eliminates most of the sound of pursuit. The rustling of underfoot leaves ceases, and the sharp impact of shoe-leather against stone and frozen earth no longer sends advance news of the hunter's progress. Trailing one's game becomes vastly easier, but at the same time is added the excitement of a closer approach, since one can overtake a leisurely browsing deer from the leeward only if patient and circumspect.

"If we'd just had this before the law went on!" said Jenness wistfully, since he alone among the men of the party had failed to bring in a deer, legally come by.

"You better take along your gun," said Lon. "Maybe a deer might try to bite you, an' you'd have to shoot him in self-defense."

"No, you don't, Lon Spencer," warned Jacintha. "That advice is 'bad medicine,' and you know it. Promise me you'll leave your 30-30 with Billy, Clinics!"

"Are you afraid a deer might bite Billy?" queried the reluctantly consenting Doctor.

"You had your chance," persisted the girl. "I don't call it sporting to shoot out of season. Now it's the deer's turn. Goodness, it's bad enough to shoot the creatures when you've a legal right to!"

"It's all very well for you to talk, I suppose," still Jenness debated. "You've got your buck, stuffed, mounted, and hung. There's no sacrifice in your leaving your rifle behind."

"I shot him in season, and not still-hunting at that," rejoined Jacintha. "I had my sights set at five hundred; Lon knows. He saw it, did n't you, Lon?"

"Sure did," corroborated Spencer. "'T was two seasons back."

"I've got enough; let me up," Jenness surrendered. "Here's where I stick with the art-lovers. Where's my camera?"

"This is the chance of a lifetime," Jacintha enthused. "I've waited six seasons for it; the conditions are perfect. Are you ready, Jack? Have you plenty of extra films?"

"Jack, my dear—er—Jacintha, do you think you'd better take a long tramp the first day out?" The Senator turned questioningly to Jenness. "How about it, Doctor?"

"It's up to her," said Jenness, with a trace of meekness. "If it feels all right, it is all right. Anyhow, Miss Jack, you can be like my old uncle. If you're not able to walk all the way round the block, walk half way round and come back. Use your judgment; only, remember, if you lame that ankle, you'll be laid up much longer than you were the first time."

With this warning, he picked up his pack and followed Tom Soccas-basin down the loosely trodden path to the lake. Lancey and Sand were the next to leave, and Jacintha kissed her father, with a cheery wish for a lucky day, and joined McQuinn by the water-hole, where Billy the cook was busy setting a line and flip for possible fish.

The two followed the new-broken trail made by the others for several hundred yards, then swung off to the south for the landing where Side Lake Carry led away through the snow-burdened trees. Over them hung a little cloud of constraint, amounting with the girl almost to embarrassment. Jack ploughed on ahead, without looking back, kicking sturdily.

into each successive drift, thereby somewhat improving the travelling for Jacintha.

Presently she spoke:

"Better let me break out a while, Mr. McQuinn."

"Not till you've tested that ankle a little longer," he snapped back over his shoulder, keeping head and eyes to the front.

Jacintha felt a little subdued. The woods were very still. The way opened up ahead of them in a series of delicious, sparkling vistas, laced with fantastic traceries of green and white. The sun-imprinted shadows, deep purple and black, lay athwart the path; the gleam of the snow was almost blinding. Showers of diamond dust, scintillant and iridescent, swirled before the eyes when little gusts of wind vibrated bush and branch. The two were powdered white on head and shoulders with the fine, sifting particles. Once a big fluff of snow dropped on the back of McQuinn's neck, and Jacintha knew that much of it must have gone down inside his collar; but beyond a little impatient shrug he gave it no heed.

The ground was lined with a thousand and one mysterious small trails of the wood-creatures. Jacintha identified tracks of squirrels, dainty imprints of grouse, and the clumsier marks of rabbits' leaping pads. All the forest was filled with fresh interest, beautiful and hitherto unsuspected delineations of a new-born, unsullied winter. Except for the muffled thrust of feet, all the sounds of the woods took on a sharp, ventriloquial distinctness. Far off to the left she heard the rattling cadence of a drumming woodpecker; there were curious snapping sounds of the frost working in the tree-trunks. From behind came an occasional echoing reverberation of cracking ice on the lake. The stinging snow-needles bit pleasantly on brow and cheek. Jacintha could see the white overhang of her eyebrows, delicately encrusted with the frost from her clouded breath.

"Are you going clear through to Side Lake, Mr. McQuinn?" she asked.

Jack stopped short and faced about, a disturbed question in his eyes.

"Why the 'mister'?" he demanded abruptly.

The query brought Jacintha up with a half-start.

"It does n't sound natural," McQuinn went on, as Jacintha failed to reply.

"Maybe you'd better get used to it, then," she returned lamely.

"I don't see why," he protested. "Are you put out with me, somehow or other? What've I did—done? Would you rather have had Lon guide you this morning?"

"Oh, no," she replied a little vaguely.

"You've got my goat," said McQuinn. "I don't know if I'm afoot or a-horseback."

He turned with an audible sigh, and went on for perhaps forty paces.

"Hi, gee! Here's a deer!" he exclaimed.

"Where, Jack, oh, where?" whispered Jacintha, stopping instantly.

"Thanks for the 'Jack,'" the man said half slyly. "Here, see them tracks?"

Jacintha gave him a reproachful glance. But the deer-tracks claimed her scrutiny.

"They're pretty fresh," he went on. "He's a big one. Shall we go after him?"

"Yes, yes," urged Jacintha.

They struck off up the slope of the "hog-back" at their left, and, stooping and creeping, followed the trail through the thick growth, every sense alert. The tracks led them over the ridge and down its farther slope into a close growth of young cedar.

"Maybe they've yarded here," the guide whispered. "No, there'd be more tracks, I guess. He's walking slow; look where he bit those tips? 'Sh!"

He crouched down in the snow, and Jacintha's quick, searching eye caught the brown and white of a throat, then the spread of wide horns, the flick of a silk-lined ear. The creature was nibbling at the young tips, making little rustling noises and bringing down clouds of snow, quite unconscious of observation.

"Don't you wish you had your gun?" breathed Jack.

"No," whispered Jacintha. "But I wish we could get a little nearer."

"Wait," warned the guide.

The buck seemed to be circling slowly, and as he followed the tempting tenderness of young cedar-tips he drew nearer and nearer. Presently he stepped into a broad patch of sunlight.

"Now," coached McQuinn; and just as a quick-springing suspicion sent the big head into the air Jacintha released the shutter.

"Click," said the camera.

"Whee-ee-ee-ew!" snorted the startled buck, and with flag erect he darted past his pursuers, crossing their path diagonally and to the right, antlers laid back on his shoulders, nose outstretched. He passed so near that Jacintha could have touched him with a stick no longer than her arm, and was off, slamming and crashing through the undergrowth in a series of teetering leaps.

"Gosh!" cried McQuinn. "Was n't he a peach! You could 'a' got him easy with that forty-four Colt's o' yours."

"I did get him!" jubilated the girl, patting her camera and twisting up a new surface of film.

"Let's go on over to'rds Side Lake," the guide suggested. "The walkin's easier, and we'll likely strike another any time."

They retraced their steps to the carry.

"Jack," said Jacintha presently.

"Yessum."

"I'm sorry I was disagreeable. I did n't mean to be. I'm worried about something."

"T ain't me, is it?" he asked, with easily returning good-nature.

"That depends," she replied. "Who are 'you'?"

"John T. McQuinn, of Fredericton, N. B."

"If that were true, I should not worry, perhaps. But I'm not sure."

"Have it your own way, Miss Bruce," he conceded, conceding nothing. "You gener'ly do. Say, it's clouding up a little."

He kept on steadily, and Jacintha said no more. But she began to study the peculiar swing and rhythm of McQuinn's shoulders. There was an entire personality expressed in that pair of shoulders and back.

"It's true, it must be true," said the girl.

"What?" asked Jack, startled, and turning abruptly. Jacintha looked him full in the eyes, and though they were very good gray eyes, well set, direct, and fearless, they wandered from hers and sought vaguely along the path for nothing in particular.

"Look at me," said Jacintha, very soberly. The gray eyes returned her gaze with a show of reluctance. "I know who you are."

The man withstood her scrutiny for a period of seconds; then he turned away, and, going to the path-side, absently brushed the snow off a prone tree and dropped upon it. He rested his elbows on his knees and supported his bowed head with one hand, while the other hung idle from a limp wrist.

"I suppose you do," he said dully. "I was afraid you'd guess it."

Jacintha traced small, irregular curves in the snow with a moccasined toe.

"Do you realize that that makes it absolutely impossible for us to go any farther? Do you know what my father would say or do if he knew who you are, as I know?"

"Yes," said the young man.

"Do you know what sort of reputation you have among decent people? Do you know what is said of you? Do you know what I was told about you as long ago as last autumn, when you were on the top of the wave as a football player?"

"I know a good deal of what you ask. I don't know what your friends said about me. I suppose they're all Yale men." He looked up with a trace of insolence, instantly erased when he saw Jacintha's face.

"No, the man was a Harvard man, one who knew what you had done for his team, and who admired you as a player. But as a man he could n't recommend you to any good girl."

"That was unfair, absurd, a lie!" cried McDunn indignantly.

"Have n't you proved it to be true?" she accused.

He made no reply.

"Mr. McDunn," she went on, determined to leave nothing unsaid now that she had found the courage and the justification for speech, "I would have been proud to count you among my friends a year ago. Though you played against Yale, you played as a fair man should play. You changed my whole idea of Harvard football. I would n't believe what they said of you. I laid it to what I thought was Harvard snob-bishness—to a social prejudice. And then I found that they, my friends at Cambridge, were right and I was wrong. I was glad you were not a Yale man, or my friend.

"If you were only what you have represented yourself to be, a countryman, a rough backwoodsman, a guide, I would give you my friendship gladly. It has taken me weeks to find out who you are, and all that time I have been giving you my confidence and my respect; can you understand where I find myself at this minute?"

"What have I done to kill your respect for me?" demanded McDunn.

"I mean, as McQuinn?"

"Nothing; quite the opposite," she assured him.

"Does n't that count for anything?" he urged. "What do you suppose I came here for? To make myself disagreeable to young girls? To lie and cheat and steal friendships to which I had no right? I came here and left all of my past, that I could leave, behind me; I came here to live out-of-doors, to get back my own self-respect, and to make myself the sort of man who could command the respect of others. Could I drag a bad name here with me and have it flopping about my legs like a horse's hobble-rope? What should I have done?"

Jacintha offered nothing.

"I don't believe now that you fully realize all it meant when I did what I did last night out there on the ice. It was something besides a few drinks of whiskey that I threw and smashed forever into the trees; it was all that was low and bad and unmanly in my whole past. I felt that it was when I did it. I did it with you there as a witness—a witness who failed to see all that was included in the act. Believe me, Miss Bruce, no other witness than you would have satisfied me."

"Is it so easy, then, to flip a bad past into the air and rid yourself of it, as if it were a counterfeit coin?"

"Easy?" he repeated. "Easy! My God! Don't take the symbol for the thing signified!"

"Did you think you could throw away your name as readily as you threw away the bottle?" she went on pitilessly.

"I never intended to do that. Can't you understand—can't you understand what I've been trying to do all these months?"

"Yes," said the girl, seeing that to go further would be needlessly cruel, and torn by the wish to say what she knew she had no right to say; "I do understand—I do understand. Who am I to judge a man—to judge you? I only know you as I have known you here in the woods; oh, Jack, I can't be a prig, hard as I may try." She checked him as he opened his mouth to speak.

"Don't misunderstand me; you have been a beast. I must be frank with you and honest with myself. I cannot afford to have you think I condone or overlook too much. I have lived like a boy, grown into a woman in boyish ways, and I see things as many girls at my age could not see them. But my friends have been clean and wholesome and honorable. You seem not to have been; that's all. But you have had it in you to be, and I have known you only since you have been living the best instead of the worst that is in you. I have no doubt other men have the same capacity for evil that is yours; they have been sooner given the gift of self-control and self-respect. So I will tell you this: I shall not mention your past again to any soul, least of all to you. I will call you Jack McQuinn and try to keep your identity from my father and my friends at camp. You and I will finish this day together, and I will know you to-day as I have known you only since you have been with us here. But to-morrow I shall ask Father to start for home. That is but right and fair to him; I cannot go on deceiving him, nor would you ask me to do so. I am old enough to act for myself in this—to take the matter into my own hands for another twenty-four hours—and I will do it for you, because—because—"

She stopped, nonplussed. She had not realized into what deep waters she was venturing. At the realization, a slow, tingling flush burned upward in her face. Jack McDunn, seeing to what pass she had come, but reading into her look that which might be an intense disgust for him, or self-condemnation, or even humiliation and shame, rose slowly and, reserving the thanks which impulse and the amenities demanded, turned his face toward Side Lake and began once more breaking a path in the drifted snow. And Jacintha followed as before.

CHAPTER XI

As McDunn had said, the sky was once more becoming overcast. There was a distinct feel of snow in the air, yet the temperature remained low. Instead of the crisp, sharp, winelike quality of sunnier moments, came a harsh, searching chill. Shadows lost their edges, as all the world fell into shadow. In the softer light the white of the snow took on a subdued and restful tone. A little wind began to blow in sifting gusts.

Jacintha and McDunn made a small fire by the wayside and brewed

tea, melting snow in a quart can with a riveted handle. Jack had long ago taught the girl the woodsman's first aid to the hungry. She knew how to kindle a blaze on a wet day, when there seemed no dry fuel in all the great outdoors. She carried matches, safe against dampness in a corked bottle. He had taught her not to call her compass a liar when she must travel on its sole assurance. Men have been lost because, finding the compass at variance with their mistaken but insistent sense of direction, they have doubted its truth. Given a clear day, Jacintha could travel by the sun, plotting her directions by her watch with careful accuracy. She felt that she need not fear the forest so long as she had power to walk a determined course. She could follow spotted trails when the axe-scars had all but healed on the tree-trunks.

They sat on a dusted log, contentedly munching their bread and corned venison, sipping scalding and unsweetened tea with keen relish. For a while the talk was of the "you-make-the-fire" and "I'll-make-the-tea" variety; but presently a thoughtful silence fell between them. At length the young man said:

"You're a mighty white girl. I never knew one like you."

"How many of the other kind have you known?" she asked.

"Not many. I'm a man's man. Never cared much for girls."

"I know I'm not a woman's woman," said Jacintha.

"May I talk to you a little about myself?" asked McDunn.

Jacintha looked at him quietly, out of level eyes.

"Do you think it would be profitable?" she asked.

"It would be mighty comforting. I've never made a confidant of any one. I'm not going to say anything alarming. I want you to understand me; I don't care for the others—just yet."

"Perhaps you'd better not," she warned. "I don't want you to do anything rash. I should blame myself if I allowed you—"

"I'll take a chance," he assured her.

She made no reply, but sat absently tapping her empty dipper, in the bottom of which a few tea leaves clung to the metal. McDunn hesitated. Then—

"I guess I'd better not, too," he said after a little. "What's the use? You'd think I was crying baby."

"I think not," said Jacintha.

"Yes, you would. I don't believe in qualifying. Some one said, 'Never deny; never explain; do your work.' I guess that's a good philosophy for me. The apologetic does n't fit my make-up."

"Is n't that rather uncompromising?" asked Jacintha. In truth, she felt a little disappointed. "You run a tremendous risk of being misunderstood."

"Everybody's misunderstood—I am, you are, and Abraham Lincoln was; so was Judas Iscariot."

"Jack!"

"It's true," he went on. "Sometimes being misunderstood is a big indication of character. Does every one understand you?"

"Few do," she admitted.

"I do," said McDunn.

"You flatter me. Aren't you getting personal?"

"Have you really made up your mind to pack up and leave camp to-morrow?"

She nodded.

"I'm going to stick around here for a couple of months," he said. "Tom and I can get jobs in the lumber camps; then we are going to hit the trail for the noisy streets and the newspaper country. Tom's hoping to sign up with the Tan Sox. I don't know what to do; it's either professional ball, or a job at nine per in an office. What do you advise?"

"The job," said Jacintha, without hesitation.

"That's my dope, too. But I thought maybe you'd see the other side; you follow the game, don't you?"

"Mr. Clarke Griffith dines with us regularly," she smiled. "Father is a fiend for batting averages."

"I thought it might appeal to you as a sporting proposition, my playing in the big league."

"As a sporting proposition, yes," she replied. "As an ethical stunt, no. It's all right for Tom. But for you, it's different—somehow."

"You don't realize how awfully right you are, Miss Jacintha. I guess it's that woman's intuition. Some day I'll make good——"

"Jack, the Young Salesman, or, The Boy Napoleon of the Leather Trade, by Oliver Optic, eh?" she bantered.

"That's no joke, either," he rejoined seriously. "Come on; let's be moving. You'll be chilled if you sit still any longer."

Somehow, good feeling had renewed itself between Jacintha and McDunn, and they swung into the carry with something of the old friendliness and frank comradeship of their many days together.

"It's no use your trying to make snap-shots in this light," he said. "But I hate to go back so early. If it starts to snow we can turn and make for camp. It's the last day, you know. I wish it might be a long one."

They ploughed on for the mile remaining of the Side Lake carry. Very gently and at first almost imperceptibly the snow began falling, and they turned reluctantly toward the camp. As they completed a third of the distance to Sixth Pistol, a big animal stalked across the path. Both stopped, breathless. This was no teetering buck or doe, but a great, black, high-shouldered creature with an enormous head and vast, palmated antlers spreading abroad until one doubted the animal's

ability to force them through the thicket. Jacintha and McDunn had approached so quietly that they had not been heard, and as they were well to leeward, the great ruminant could not wind them.

Jacintha had not seen a moose during the entire season, nor had she seen one so huge at any time. Jack tiptoed forward to a point where the moose disappeared, and Jacintha, following, heard the crash of branches as it forced its ponderous way along.

"Come on, let's follow him," she urged. "I want to get one more good look at him."

They picked up the trail, and crept stealthily into the brush, telling off the great, broad tracks through a jungle of spruce and cedar. The snow was now falling more rapidly, and immediately the wind increased, driving the storm through the forest in long, almost horizontal pencilings. The moose evidently found nothing of sufficient interest to delay him, and kept on and on without giving his pursuers the opportunity to study him.

Jack looked at his watch.

"Three o'clock," he said. "It gets dark early these cloudy days. Shan't we cut over toward the lake?"

"Pretty soon, pretty soon," agreed Jacintha, the excitement of the chase in her eye, her breath coming in short, nervous cadence. "Let's go just a little further; maybe he'll stop."

The moose had led them up a long hillside, well away from Sixth Pistol, and the trail lay among the hardwood where the travelling was comparatively easy. A little deceived by the afternoon light, and the undulating nature of the country, the two found themselves in a region that the storm made unfamiliar. At four o'clock, as the tracks grew indistinct in the falling snow, Jacintha yielded to Jack's importunities to give up the chase and swing off for camp, which even now could not be reached before dark.

The snow came sifting through the trees in great clouds, and the depth of the drifts increased so rapidly that travel began to be difficult and wearisome. Jacintha's ankle set up a dull, aching complaint, emphasized by occasional sharp twinges.

"We went too far," she said. "Let's get back to camp the shortest way."

The direct line, by compass, unfortunately led them through a good deal of very rough travelling. Great tangled windfalls presented sometimes impenetrable *chevaux de frises* which they must circumnavigate, to a considerable lengthening of their journey. The gusts howled and beat about their heads, the great trees groaned and moaned, branches tossed away their loads of snow, and much of the time Jacintha and McDunn fought the storm as one fights tumbling breakers on the seashore.

And then, when Jacintha began to hope that they might soon strike the lake shore and make their last necessary fight against the sweep of the gale across the ice, came disaster, swift and crushing.

Jack, ploughing the way, mounted a fallen trunk, long since honey-combed by worm and rot. His usually certain foot broke through the shell, and he lost his balance, falling with a crash upon the farther side. It so happened that the tree overhung a gulley, or ravine, a pit-fall completely concealed by the thick-clouding snow. Jacintha heard a half-stifled cry of pain, and, following with more caution, creeping under the trunk and between its down-thrust limbs, which caught and held her as she wriggled through, peered into the ravine. It was maybe twenty feet deep, and Jack lay writhing at the foot of a bare wall of stone, trying vainly to regain his feet.

"Jack, Jack, are you hurt?" called the girl.

The man turned a ghastly white face toward her, and tried to speak, but failed, then toppled over in what appeared to be a dead faint. Jacintha worked her way along the edge of the wall until she could find a possible descent, and after ten minutes' struggle reached the side of her companion. He lay face downward in a drift, and Jacintha, seizing him by the shoulders, drew him up and held him against her. He opened his eyes, sought to stand, and crumpled down into the snow.

"It's no use, it's no use," he groaned. "My leg's broken. Don't try—to—hold me up, don't—I'm too heav—" and fainted again.

CHAPTER XII

JACINTHA BRUCE eased her wounded companion down into the cushioning snow, and stood looking at him in a sort of horrified stupefaction. There lay McDunn, who typified to her the acme of full-blooded manhood, inert, pale, a collapsed figure as futile as a rag-baby; no longer a guide and protector, but a charge upon her humanity, upon every instinct of that *noblesse oblige* which to her was more than gospel.

She awoke to her position with a shuddering realization that she was worse than alone. By herself she could find her way back to camp, or at least make such shift of self-preservation as might ultimately bring her out of her dilemma, though the process might be not without hardship; that, like Æneas, she could say, "Some day it will be pleasant to remember these things." But here was indeed a horse of a different pattern. Alone with a helpless man who was hurt, she knew not how desperately; with the darkness already shutting in so that even as she stood there she could not distinguish his features; with the snow blanketing down in overwhelming folds; and with the temperature falling, falling, as the night deepened, the prospect was appalling.

Jacintha seized McDunn and dragged him into a sitting posture, his back against the face of the vertical rocky wall of the ravine. He came to himself, groaned, and spoke.

"Please, Jack, don't faint again," begged the girl.

"I won't—I'll do my best," he said. "I'll feel all right in a minute. Just let me rest—maybe it's only a sprain."

He sought to move the injured leg, but desisted with a grunt of agony.

"No use," he said. "It's a goner, that leg. I think my foot caught in a crack of the rock when I fell, and my weight snapped the bone."

McDunn bent over and explored tentatively with his hand.

"Busted! I should say it is!"

Jacintha was kneeling beside him, her arm back of his shoulder. With her left hand she was tightening the handkerchief he wore about his neck and engaging the top button of his coat.

"Do you think you can make it?" asked Jack.

"Make what?" demanded Jacintha.

"Camp."

"We've got to, have n't we?" she returned. "I don't just see how we can travel in the dark, but——"

"We?" he echoed. "We? I did n't say anything about 'we.' I said 'you.' Have you got your compass?"

"You're crazy," said Jacintha.

"Well, maybe it would be risky; but I don't know—you'll freeze here, anyhow, but you'll keep warm travelling, and I don't think the lake's very far. The worst part will be getting across the ice to the island—you might miss it, you know."

"Jack McDunn," cried Jacintha, "do you think I'd leave you here alone!"

"You've got to," he answered. It was now so dark she could not see his face, but she sensed the fierce agony of pain that welled up in his voice. "You've got to; it's death to stay; death, I say! I can't let you. Don't waste a minute—go now; go, I tell you!"

Jacintha made no answering argument, but busied herself in scooping out the snow to make a sort of pocket against the rock, and in pulling together such detachable boughs and dead brush as she could manage. The snow-chasing wind bore down through the ravine, but Jacintha's shield served in a measure to protect McDunn and herself, and as the snow drifted in behind the barrier it formed a fairly effective break.

McDunn went on:

"You go ahead now, and tell 'em where I am, and they'll come and get me. If you stay, we'll both freeze; if you go, you may save us both. It's our only chance."

"If I go," said Jacintha, "I'll get lost; and then we'll both freeze. If I stay, I'll fight it out with you, and we'll both pull through. You know they never could find you if I got to camp."

"Then, go anyhow," cried Jack. "Go, I insist, go! You won't get lost. The lake is n't far—you've a chance. They'll be watching for you—searching for you—there'll be lights—you can scream every step. They'll come to you if you get within two hundred yards of Chipmonk. Oh, God! Why are you so stubborn!"

"I'm going to stay here," said Jacintha. "You talk nonsense. Don't you know you'd freeze to death if I left you?"

"We'll both freeze if you stay; oh, Jacintha, never mind me! What's the difference if I do? It's a nice, easy death, they say. Anything would be better than this horrible pain. Besides, I'm not worth risking your life for. I tell you you have n't a chance in a thousand, and I'm—I'm not worth the chance. Besides, you can get me saved anyhow."

He became quite incoherent with the awful gnawing pain of his leg, that shot 'way up into his body, and the even worse pain of his remorse for having allowed Jacintha to stay so late on the moose-trail, for his awkwardness in falling, for the fatal dilemma into which they had come through what he felt to be his own fault. Besides, the cold was eating into his being, for his forced inactivity made his blood sluggish. He knew that, left to himself, he should die in an hour.

Jacintha Bruce remembered a big white-birch tree that she had passed about twenty feet up the ravine from where Jack lay. She now felt her way back along the rock-face until she reached it, and with quick slashes of her knife secured a quantity of the bark. With this, and various fragments of more or less dead growth, she kindled a doubtful blaze which presently she nursed into a fire of considerable proportions, although much of her fuel proved to be almost unflammable.

It was slow work, and she stopped frequently to minister as well as she could to Jack, who, at her bidding, sought wearily to move his arms and his unhurt leg about to encourage circulation, a process bitterly painful. Jacintha even maltreated him by various shakings and poundings and rubbings, which had at least the effect of disturbing the broken limb, and so setting up a screaming agony that kept the poor fellow awake until finally the fire grew big enough to throw out a welcome volume of heat.

"Now, Mr. Jack McDunn, I guess we won't either of us freeze!" cried the triumphant Jacintha.

"You're a wonder," groaned McDunn, his pain-deadened eyes following her every motion.

In the light of the fire Jacintha was enabled to make short excursions.

sions for fuel. When she had secured a quantity of dead branches, she proceeded to elaborate somewhat upon the shelter she had begun, and presently had it roofed with boughs, and from the fire blazing in front it caught enough heat to eliminate the immediate danger of Jack's freezing. She cut several armfuls of spruce and fir branches, and, when she had scraped away the snow, made a fairly comfortable bed and assisted the almost helpless McDunn to reach it. Then she made tea, strong and hot, of which McDunn drank eagerly, as did Jacintha.

"You're a wonder," said the man again, between lips distorted with suffering; "a wonder, a bird!"

"I've been a good pupil, Jack," said the girl. "You taught me these little things."

"I didn't know, when I taught you to build a fire, that I was teaching you to save my life—if I live."

"You'll live, all right," said Jacintha. "That's what I'm here for."

"Good girl!" said McDunn huskily, and quite disregarding the respect due one's employer. Jacintha poked the fire, but said nothing.

The night wore on leadenly. There was no let-up in the fall of snow, and around the beleaguered pair the drifts deepened in hemming barriers. Jacintha kept busy most of the time, gathering fuel—no small task—heating the tea which she felt must be given Jack at frequent intervals, and beating back the snows that continually encroached upon the "pocket" next the rock.

At first she talked a little with McDunn, but his responses went more and more awry, so that she saw the effort of replying must affect him badly. She wondered what the people at camp were doing, what steps they were taking to find McDunn and herself, what could be her father's state of mind. Thus, with worry and anxiety, her mental suffering must have been almost as great as the physical pain of her companion.

After some hours Jack began to talk. Two sentences proved him quite out of his head. He muttered incoherencies, curious mixtures of the jargon of the hobo and the legitimate English of a gentleman. Jacintha thought him dreaming and shook him by the shoulder.

"Wake up, wake up," she told him. He only rolled vacant eyes at her, and cried:

"You hav'n't got me yet, Eli; not yet!"

Jacintha started back at this, half doubting her own ears. What did he mean? In a moment came the explanation.

"Let me up; I'll show 'em! It's that — ankle—never mind it, old man. Hear 'em yell, 'Get 'im, get McDunn!' That won't help 'em. Here, Dick, that's the wrong signal. Give Al the ball—'round this way. Now, fellahs, here's a hole for you, come on——"

Jack was back on the football field, injured, but fighting once more

that uphill, winning fight of the Crimson with the Blue. He tried to rise, but Jacintha pinned him to the ground, and held him there struggling until the frenzy passed. His cheeks were aflame with fever, his lips parched. She melted snow and gave him water, ice-cold.

So passed the terrible hours of that night. Toward morning McDunn's delirium led him into less honorable fields of endeavor, where he heard the rattle of chips and the repeated clink of glass. He babbled of things that made Jacintha ashamed for him—things of the rude, unbridled world of a young man without responsibility or restraint. And he talked hatefully and defiantly to one whom Jacintha took to be Daniel Tresperson McDunn, with unfilial and unlovely sneers; then he spoke the word "Mother," and there was nothing of disrespect, but a certain bravado and foolhardy recklessness.

But all that night Jack McDunn never spoke the name of any woman or raved of aught that might sear the leaf of modesty; truly did his ravings testify that he was indeed "a man's man."

About dawn, Jacintha, exhausted and weak with hunger, dropped down beside McDunn, who had for some time been half quiet. He roused in his fever, and said thickly:

"Jacintha Bruce, I carried that whiskey four days, an' when I'd start to take a drink, I'd think, 'Nix, Jacintha, nix, that's not a sporting proposition. It's a cinch—for the booze.' An' I'm tellin' this to you, and the rest can all go to —, for I love you, Jacintha Bruce, you big beautiful devil, an' some day, if I beat the booze, I'll get you, by —, I'll get you—"

And Jacintha stuffed her ears with her mittened thumbs, on impulse; and on impulse freed them of so much impediment to hearing, lest she should miss something. But he only laughed, a cackling unmodulated laugh that echoed in ghastly reverberation among the trees, and floated uncannily down the whistling wind. Then he stared up at the kneeling girl, and, looking seemingly through her, said:

"Well, Tom, old scout, we've fooled 'em so far; but I guess they'll soon get next. The girl's wise, Tom; and oh, Tom, when she does get my number, it's the lumber-woods for mine—only, I'm daffy about her, Old Soccsy, daffy as a loon."

CHAPTER XIII

JACINTHA'S situation when day began to dawn grayly through the snow-laden trees was complicated. She had beaten off the cold, and kept herself and McDunn alive; that was something. But her companion was in a pitiable, desperate state, and in the frenzies of his fever might do himself further harm. Jacintha dared not take advantage of daylight to go alone for help, because, although the falling snow had

measurably diminished, what might not McDunn do in her absence? He could not keep the fire going to prevent his freezing, but he could very readily fall into it should he repeat one of his already frequent attempts to rise. Nourishment was utterly wanting, except such meagre comfort as could be had from heated water. There was no more tea.

Jacintha raised her voice in a long, shrill halloo, but she had no confidence in its power to carry far through the snow-smothered forest. A searching party might be days in finding them, even if such a party found them at all before cold and starvation had claimed them. Still the girl kept up an intermittent calling, her voice thrown mockingly back at her from the forest.

She felt weak and ill from hunger and exhaustion; her ankle throbbed with increasing protest. The caking snow on her clothing had melted in the heat of the fire, and she was wet to the skin, shivering with cold, bedraggled, forlorn, and utterly miserable. She knew every possible attempt would be made to locate her and McDunn, but what were the favoring chances? Those at camp had only the most general idea of the direction they had taken the morning before.

McDunn whimpered and moaned in his delirium; sometimes he seemed asleep, then he would rouse and stare with unseeing, vacant eyes, mouthing incoherencies. Jacintha fed the fire and sought to dry herself, hopelessly and mechanically.

Finally, she came to a determination of desperation, a forlorn chance—yes, an impossibility, no doubt. It was n't even a sporting chance, she thought grimly. But there was nothing else to do.

She tightened her belt, as a man would have done; pulled her knitted cap firmly down over her neck and forehead; discarded her mittens to free her hands, which she warmed thoroughly over the fire.

Now she went to McDunn, and, seizing him under the arms, pulled him to a half-kneeling position, and before he could crumple down again, threw herself on all fours in front of him, so that he fell face downward across her hips and shoulders. She gripped his wrists with all her strength, one of his arms on each side of her neck, and then, with a straining lurch, struggled to her feet, stooping low and supporting the limp form upon her back. Then she plunged forward down the slope of the ravine, and, stumbling and staggering, swung off toward where her compass had told her must lie the frozen surface of Sixth Pistol, whether it be yards, rods, or miles away.

The night of the big December storm brought no wink of sleep to the campers on Chipmonk. As the afternoon waned and the early winter darkness closed down, the various members of the party came straggling in, filled with small anecdotes of the day; supper would soon be ready, and all were ravenous.

Billy the cook clattered pots and tin plates as he set the long table, and dished up steaming deer-meat stew in a deep agate-ware pan.

"Come on, all hands; here's yuhr grub. Pitch in while she's hot." It was his unfailing formula at meal-times, varying never by so much as a syllable.

He went to the door and thrust a sharp "Whoo-hoo!" out into the snowy darkness.

"Tell ye, she's a-siftin' right daown," he observed. "The' must be three, four inches already; blowin' consider'ble, tew."

"Funny Jacintha does n't come," said the Senator. He fell to heartily; Jacintha was not the sort of girl about whom one worries unduly.

The meal progressed, however, with an increasing atmosphere of uneasiness. If the door had swung suddenly open and Jacintha had stamped in with McQuinn at her heels, she would have been pleasantly scolded for "keeping them all waiting." There would have been no loud voicing of joy at seeing the two safe indoors; one would have had to sense the relief between the lines, to have read it in the slightly hysterical quality of the supper-time banter, in the higher key of the laughter, in the sharpened barbs of masculine irony, in speeding which Jacintha herself had come to be an adept.

By the time the meal was finished, the anxiety of the party became tangible. Billy went to the door and hung out a lantern, he also shot his long, shrill "Whoo-hoos" into the darkness with increasing frequency.

"Hi, gosh!" he grunted. "Where'n tarnation j'yuh s'pose them critters is, huh?"

He puttered about among his pots and pans, scrubbing and wiping and setting away, putting beans to soak, and washing out his towels.

"Why'n't you take that lahntern, Lon, 'n' go daown t' the landin' an' yell like ——?" he inquired.

"I was jest goin' tew," replied Lon. He went out into the snow, and presently they heard his wolfish howl as he shot it forth over the ice. In five minutes he came back.

"I yelled a lung out," he said, "done it a dozen times. I could n't hear no answer. Say, did n't Jack take no gun?"

"Jacintha told him to leave it behind," explained the Senator. "Do you mean he might have signalled with it?"

"Sure. Three shots means distress; we'd 'a' gone out the minute we heered 'em."

"They would n't carry far a night like this," said the Senator.

"Wal, I dunno. Them carbines speaks pooty sharp. I've heerd one over five mile off."

"How many lanterns have we?" asked Lancey Keane.

"Four," said Billy.

"Sand," said Lancey, "let's you and me start and see what we can see."

"You won't see nawthin'," said Sand. "I'll go ye, tho'."

"We'll go Side Lake carry way," said Sand, as he and Lancey started off with rifle and lantern. "We'll be lucky if we hit it at all. Anyhow, we're likely to meet them folks right down here 't the landin'. Prob'ly we won't be gone long."

They slammed the door, letting in a small flurry of snow as they crossed the threshold. After a while Dr. Jenness looked at Tom Soccabasin. Both rose and equipped themselves for travel. It was an hour since Lancey and Sand had gone. Lon had vainly tried to lighten the atmosphere with anecdotes that ordinarily would have been welcomed with roars of laughter, but which now only heightened the tension. The Senator continually looked at his watch. At eight o'clock the door closed behind the Doctor and Tom. A heavy silence fell, disturbed only by the gentle wheezing of Billy's briar pipe.

"I mind one time I's out in a storm like this," said Lon, "over on Porkerpine Ridge. It got dark and snowed at the same time, an' I'd a good twelve mile from——"

The Senator went unheedingly out, bareheaded, into the whirling blizzard, but returned in a moment.

"You can't see your hand in front of your face," he said. "Well, Lon, there's still an extra lantern. I guess it's up to us old fellows."

He got briskly into his mackinaw, as if the prospect of action had something stimulating, almost cheering, in it.

"I wish 't I c'd go with ye," said Billy wistfully; "but I s'pose some one's got to stay here to keep a fire and see 't some grub's warm."

So he sat smoking alone in the camp, listening to the thudding blows of the snow-laden wind upon the split roof.

All night long the searchers journeyed back and forth in the storm, each pair averaging two-hour absences. They would come in and Billy would minister to them with hot tea and bread and meat. Sometimes two pairs were back at once, and notes exchanged.

"We went clean through to Side Lake," said Sand to Jenness and Tom. "I thought we sh'd never hit the carry, but I knowed them three old stumps by the shore jest before you git to it. We hollered every dozen steps or so, but it ain't no use hollerin', seem's if."

"What do you think could have happened, Sand?" asked Jenness.

"Dunno. They may be all right—got lost out an' made up their minds to stay in one place till daylight. That'd be good sense, if they's lost, only for the cold. I reckon they'd have a fire—I dunno 'bout Jack; honest to God, Tom, is that fellah a reg'lar woodsman?"

Soccabasin shook his head.

"He is," he said, "and then again he is n't. He's an experienced hunter, and knows the woods, but he's never guided before. He knew enough to get his license, and he's trustworthy. He's a friend of mine, and I wanted to help him."

"Don't you ever let on to the old Senator, now, boys," warned Sand. "Chances was the fellah could have got away with it ninety-nine times out of a hundred—he took a sportin' chance, as the young lady'd say herself. I hope to God he hain't lost, that's all! Come on, Mr. Keane."

Lancey gulped down the last hot swallow of tea, and they returned to the search. Tom and Jenness stayed behind a few minutes.

"It looks like it's up to me, does n't it?" said the great Indian. "I recommended him; it's surely up to me. I thought he'd make good."

"Who is he, Tom?" asked the Doctor.

"Jack? Jack McQuinn?" returned Tom. "I'll tell you to-morrow if he—he does n't come back. He'd rather I did n't tell, though."

"You'll have to," said Jenness fiercely.

"Yes," said the big fellow; "I guess that's right—I'll have to. But not to-night, not to-night. Shall we start out again?"

And so it went, until the belated, snowy dawn, when the searchers found themselves all together in camp once more. They were fatigued past all telling, from ceaseless ploughing, ploughing, through the high-piled drifts. They had beaten up every path and carry leading from Sixth Pistol; had penetrated miles into the snow-smothered wilderness, often running no small risk of losing themselves. They were almost voiceless from shouting; their eyes were bloodshot with peering into the darkness against the stabbing flakes, their faces abraded by wind and ice and the lash of branches.

Yet in spite of exhaustion they were tense, high-keyed, wrought up with undimmed purpose.

"Come, Bill," cried Sand irritably. "Git a move on! Ain't you made no coffee?"

"I sure have," said Billy. "'T the — j'yuh think, huh? Think-ummer — fool, huh?"

"She's lettin' up some," said Lon. "I cal'late it's 'bout snowed out. The' was a heap of it fell. The wind's died down. Looks like it's goin' ter clear. I never see it snow so much without the cold moderatin' none."

Each man had a story of his night to tell, but all were painfully barren of clue or sign.

"Gimme s' more coffee, Billy," said Sand. "I hain't goin' to hang around here no longer 'n I can help. Now 't's daylight, we c'n travel

better. We ain't got no time to lose, if them people is really lost. If they camped down all night an' made a fire, they'll be comin' in soon. But if they don't show up, we just got ter find 'em, by God! They hain't no two ways about that!"

The six men struck out again over the ice. There seemed nothing to do but to continue the search along the lake-borders and back among the ridges, with the aid of the now well-established daylight.

The air had cleared wonderfully, although the sun was not yet out. The snow-clouds were beginning to break; there was no appreciable wind. A hundred yards from Chipmonk the party began to fan off, and presently the three pairs of men were well separated on their way to different points of entrance to the forest.

Tom Soccabasin and Doctor Jenness were the middle couple. Two or three hundred yards separated them from their flanking groups. They made shorewards with rapid strides, running wherever the snow on the ice was thin enough to permit.

Tom, a little in advance, suddenly stopped, and pointed. Jenness, coming up, followed his indicating finger eagerly, but saw nothing.

"Don't you see?" cried Tom. "It's smoke."

Jenness strained his weary, squinting eyes; back beyond the shore he now discerned a thin, hazy blue wreath, wavering uncertainly against a dark background of the evergreens. It curled up sluggishly and made a little smutty streak above the skyline. Simultaneously Jenness and Tom Soccabasin emitted a long, hoarse yell; they began to gesticulate and point wildly, and the others, hearing and seeing, stopped and peered at the ridge. Then all six broke into a clumsy, plunging race for the shore, heading for the point nearest the source of the smoke.

"Spread out!" cried Lon. "Spread out! Don't keep too near together, but don't lose sight of each other; and yell like ——!"

Thus, in line of skirmishers, they advanced through the thick woods, diving into drifts, skirting windfalls, perspiring and sobbing with effort. It was hard going, but the speedier men held back for the slower, and preserved the integrity of the line. In five minutes Tom Soccabasin, rounding a great rock, came upon a perpendicular wall of ledge, and—

"Here, I got it!" he roared. He had struck a deep, foot-ploughed channel. Along the wall, fifty yards to his left, rose the smoke-column. The other five closed in, panting.

"They've gone—here's their tracks," he cried, and all turned and went swarming back over the plain trail that they had somehow missed in their progress up the slope.

Tom Soccabasin, leading, stopped short within ten yards of the shore. Came an awful cessation of shouting, and as Senator Bruce, the last in the line, struggled up, he found Dr. Jenness kneeling in the

snow, pulling the limp form of an apparently lifeless man from where it had lain prone across the equally lifeless body of his daughter, stretched face downward in the snow.

"Jacintha!" he cried. "My little girl! Jack! Jacintha!"

CHAPTER XIV

JACINTHA BRUCE sat in a rocking-chair made of a sugar-barrel and various odds and ends of make-shift rusticity. She looked about the same as usual, except that perhaps she lacked a little in vividness of color, such as one gets and keeps only by constant application of wind and sun. One foot, in a moccasin with a loosened lace, was propped on an empty soap-box. Jacintha was writing.

It was early afternoon. Billy the cook put away his last tin plate, rattled the stove-covers, and pushed a few sweepings out through the door ahead of a twig broom.

"Me, I'm agoin' over to Suell's Cove and set a couple o' lines, provided you don't need me here as a trained nurse no longer," he said, shrugging into his mackinaw.

"Surely," agreed Jacintha. "Go along; we're all right. Only, be sure you bring home some fish, Billy."

"I will if they're there," said Billy. "Goo'-by."

He slammed the door, and through the small front window the girl saw him trudge down the path and off over the snow-covered lake.

"I'm glad he's gone," said a voice from somewhere. "He gets on my nerves. He's told that moose and bear story three times in the last month."

"I thought you were asleep," said Jacintha, turning in the direction of the voice.

Jack McDunn lay in the great bough bed, at one end, his body parallel with the deacon-seat. He was pale and wasted, with thin, stubby cheeks. One leg was propped up and nicely adjusted in some sort of unexplainable weighted harness.

"How are you feeling?" asked Jacintha.

"Pretty fair. My nap did me good. I don't ache to-day like I did yesterday."

"Poor old Jack," said Jacintha.

"Won't you come over here?" asked the disabled guide in a purposely pathetic tone.

Jacintha set her foot on the floor and hobbled to the deacon-seat, where she sat down quite near the invalid.

"I'm a pig to make you, when it hurts so," said Jack. "But I want to have you near me—it's sort of soothing, you know." He reached for her hand, but she drew it away. "What time is it?"

"Half after one," Jacintha replied. "Are you hungry? Can't I get you your broth?"

"Not now, please. Let's wait a little while—it'll taste better then. I must be a funny sketch," said Jack, rubbing an experimental hand over his chin. "When do you think your friend Clinics will let me be moved?"

"Next week, maybe."

"I never was sick a day in bed in my life," he announced.

"I've heard you say that ten times since yesterday morning," said Jacintha. "Anyhow, you've been sick enough this time to make up for it."

"Want to read to me?" cajoled McDunn.

"What shall I read?" she asked.

"Find a love story in that bunch of old magazines—a nice mushy one."

"Oh, no, not that kind," said the girl. "Here's an article on 'Overhand Versus Underhand Pitching,' by——"

"Punk!" said McDunn.

"How about 'The Soft-Nosed Bullet for'——"

"Bunk!"

"But it's very interesting," said Jacintha.

"Pooh!" returned McDunn irritably. "See if you can't find 'Lady Laura's Lover,' or something with sentiment in it."

"Fiddlesticks!" said the girl. "Here's one you might like—sounds good—'Soldiers of Justice,' by Lieutenant Washington Wood, U. S. A. It looks bluggy as everything."

"That's the eye," said the sick man. "Commencing——"

Jacintha plunged into the tale, sitting sidewise on the deacon-seat. Presently she said:

"Let go my hand, Jack. I can't turn the pages."

"Bother the pages. That drool makes me nervous. I'd rather talk. I keep thinking and thinking and thinking—can't get it straight in my mind about that night in the snow. Must have been fun for you—were n't you a brick!"

"I thought you were over your delirium," said Jacintha, "but I'm afraid it's coming back. Better be quiet and rest."

"Think of it," went on Jack, "a big boob weighing a hundred and eighty being carried three hundred yards by a little hundred-pound sparrow of a girl——"

"You mean hundred-and-forty-pound sparrow," corrected Jacintha. "Besides, why remind me of it? If I'd had brains, I would n't have done it. It makes me blush when I realize that any fool would have known the smoke was all we needed to bring help."

"That makes no never-minds!" cried Jack "It's the way you

did it—the amazing, superhuman courage of you that counts. How could you know they'd see the smoke? You had n't an idea we were so near the lake."

"At that, I did n't get there," she deprecated.

"You're taking a mean advantage of me," complained Jack.

"Am I?"

"Sure you are, to sit there and belittle yourself when I have n't strength enough to—to—properly resent it."

"All right, then," rejoined the girl, "have it your own way. I'm a heroine, a regular Joan of Arc, if that will keep you quiet. Only, I know better."

"Anyhow, I'm going to marry you pretty soon," remarked Jack. "That is, I am when I get a good enough job to rent a flat."

"Oh, Jack," protested Jacintha, blushing a flaming and becoming scarlet, "it's very improper to talk that way to me here."

It was perhaps the tenth time that McDunn had seized an occasion to make the same daring assertion, and the girl wondered why she could not force herself to resent his presumption.

"Old prig!" accused McDunn. "If you don't marry me, I'll follow you 'round as long as you live, like a grateful dog, and come up to you in public places, and whine pathetically."

Jacintha at this point pulled her hand away again. Queer how that hand kept straying into Jack's. She got up and limped over to the table.

"I forgot something," she said. "We had some mail while you were asleep. A couple of loggers on their way to Curtis's camp stopped here for dinner, and brought us a lot of stuff. Here's a letter for you."

"Who'd be writing me?" he queried.

Jacintha gave him a fat, four-cent envelope. McDunn gasped when he saw the superscription.

"Good Lord, it's from my dad!" he cried. "How'd he know I was up this way?"

"Maybe the letter tells," said Jacintha guardedly.

"Read it to me," he demanded.

"M-mm," she negatived.

"Why not?"

"Read it yourself; it is meant for nobody but you."

"I don't feel strong enough," lied McDunn.

"Neither do I," she rejoined.

"Look here, Jacintha Bruce," argued the invalid, "I've a reason—a big one. That letter is from my father—I have n't an idea what's in it. Ten to one he rakes me over the coals; but that's just why I want you to read it. I want you to get the truth about me as others have seen me. I've told you; now let's see what some one else says.

You read the letter; maybe when you're through you'll never want to speak to me again. Jacintha, I'm wild about you, absolutely wild; but I'm going to be honest with you, and if you throw me down after you read that letter, I'll take my medicine like a man."

"I'd rather not."

"Come, now," he cried, "it's a sporting chance; it ought to appeal to you. Open it up; read it before the rest of the crowd comes in."

He looked at her out of big, pleading gray eyes, and she returned the look direct, her own eyes sombre, lips compressed.

"A sporting chance," she repeated. "You're a good sport, all right, Mr. Jack McDunn!"

She ripped the envelope and drew out the letter.

"Here goes," she said, and began:

KALAMAWASSETT, Dec. —, 19—

DEAR JOHN:

I got a letter yesterday from Senator W. N. Bruce. I used to know him years ago. The letter told me a lot of things about you and what's happened to you lately. I suppose you're a pretty sick boy, but I hope by the time this reaches you things will be looking up. Bruce agreed to wire me if you didn't improve to suit the doctor. Lucky thing for you there is a doctor in that party.

Now, John, I'm going to try to talk a little bit in this letter as I should like to talk to you to your face, if I could; though I never had much luck that way. I'm going to try to make this letter as pleasant as possible for you to read; but first off I want to say a few things right from the shoulder that I hope you will take to heart; and if you get mad with me for saying them, I can't help it.

I want you to realize that I have been disappointed in you, and it is on another man's say-so that I hang the least hope that I won't always be. Jim Wrenn's only son, Will, is out here with Jim, helping run the bank; when I see those two going home noons to dinner together, it makes me blue as a whetstone. You're my only son, but so far you have n't been any son at all to me, except to spend my money and what you could wheedle out of your mother——

Jacintha broke in with,

"Oh, Jack, I can't. You're not fair to me!"

"Go on, go on," he gritted savagely.

—wheedle out of your mother, for rum and fast motors, or to gamble with. I never heard that you did anything worse with it, I'll give you credit for that; but what you have done is bad enough. That last scrape, the run-in with the police, a jail sentence, and all——

"Give me that letter!" cried Jack. He snatched it from the girl's hand. "It's enough."

"Shall I get you your broth, dear?" asked Jacintha.

McDunn looked at Jacintha in a kind of dazed wonder. She had never gone that far before. He passed his hand in front of his eyes, and turned his face toward the back wall of the camp, blinking fast.

"Poor old dear," said Jacintha. "It's all right. We won't read the letter now. It was a mistake. You're not strong enough. Let me get you some broth."

Jack turned his face toward her, his jaw set. He thrust the letter back into Jacintha's hand.

"Read it," he charged her fiercely. "Finish it, finish it."

Jacintha resumed reluctantly, and in a low voice that expressed a misery of her own:

—and all, was pretty near the limit. I wondered you had the nerve to come back to Kalamawassett last summer; but when we had that talk and you tore up my check, I must say I had a little bit of respect for you, mad as it made me when you did it.

But this letter of Bruce's has set me thinking. I lay awake all last night studying you, and I'm writing you from the heart to-day; you can take it or leave it, but I'm going to do justice to myself, anyhow.

The thing I'm afraid of is the liquor. But you're young and strong, and if you've got any brains you can work that problem out the same as you'll have to work out others as you grow older. I'm not offering you any advice about drinking booze, because that kind of advice is the most futile on earth.

I gather from Bruce's letter, however, that he likes you; he's discovered something in you that I seem to have overlooked; or did you take pains to hide it from me so I could n't help overlooking it? He says you've got the stuff of a man in you; your grandfather had; I have, if I do say it myself. My father was rich, but I consider myself as much a self-made man as if I'd started with nothing. If you've got the makings of something in you, it is yours honestly.

For your own sake, then, and for your mother's, and for mine—I admit it, John, I'm getting along in years, you know—I ask you to come home and see if you can't hook on with me and help me run my affairs. I can hire good help, but hired help is n't what I want. I've all kinds of interests. Maybe you could help me in the timber-land business; you may be interested to know that the very woods you were lost in belong to me, as it happens.

I'll give you all the rope you want—I'll not interfere with you or force my advice on you, though I'll help you if you ask help.

Some day you will get my property anyhow. I'd like to have the satisfaction of knowing you have the ability to manage it. There are men who'd disinherit a boy like you, but that is n't my way. If you go on raising the devil as long as I live, you'll get the money just the same, but you can imagine how I'll feel.

And now about the Bruce girl. The Senator did n't say much about her, but I'm no fool. Somehow or other, she saved your life—Bruce did n't give the details, but his pride would n't let him hide the main fact altogether, and I don't blame him.

If you fall in love with—

Jacintha pushed the unread portion of the letter into Jack's hand.

"It's no use, I can't do it," she said.

"You've got to," he urged.

"M-mm!"

"Then, I will," said Jack. "Listen."

"No," she said. "I'm going to the door to get a breath of fresh air." She arose; Jack gripped her hand and pulled her down to the seat again.

"Wait," he said. He rapidly skimmed the remaining pages of the letter, then he handed them to Jacintha. "Read it to yourself," he commanded.

As Jacintha read, Jack watched her, and saw the warm color come scampering into her face, until she was as pink as a baby from collar to brow. She laid the letter down on the blanket.

"What's the answer?" cried Jack.

"He's right about the two years," said the girl gently, her eyes fixed on a far-away nothingness.

"I suppose so; but what do you say? The old gentleman's game, all right; and you know how I feel. Two years is a long time, but Dad's right. Come, put me out of my misery quick—please, what's the answer?"

Jacintha leaned over, her face close to McDunn's, and said softly:

"It's a sporting chance, Jack dear. I'll take it."

She kissed him once on the lips, slipping away before he could get her into his arms.

Which was just as well, for Billy the cook pushed the door open within three minutes, and began pottering around among his pots and pans and stove-lids, meanwhile rehearsing a frayed and mossy anecdote which both had heard.

Half an hour later the rest of the camping party straggled in. Senator Bruce and Doctor Jenness entered first, and the physician went to McDunn with a few questions, casually asked and as offhandedly answered. Then he felt his patient's pulse. As he rose from the deacon-seat, he turned an accusing eye on the cook.

"Bill," he snapped, "you're a darned poor chaperon."

But Senator Bruce seemed to be the only person in the camp who took the matter seriously at all.



THE MOTIVE POWER BEHIND GERMANY'S AMBITION

By WALDO ADLER

FOREWORD

THEIR grim discipline, and the way in which yet another army corps goes forward and carries the colors into a position as soon as it is made vacant by the destruction of entire brigades, has lately made the Germans appear to us like those iron men of the American north of whom we have read in fiction, or like sagas of the old Saxon days—in whose existence we had been disbelievers. The German of American tradition, with his long, china-bowl pipe, red nose, rotund proportions, and inevitable trailing dachshund, has disappeared, and it is well that he has gone, along with the stage Irishman and other burlesques of vigorous foreign nations. In the contest now raging the German army may eventually lose to overwhelming odds, but throughout the world the war will assuredly have had one long-lasting result: it will have put the German nation before the world in high relief as a nation that is at least the equal of other European nations in the brains of its leaders, the vigor of spirit and power of loyalty of its men. Winners or losers, the future energies of the Germans will flow largely into the channels of commercial life, and therefore their capacities in that direction are now of peculiar interest.

IF you had gone, as I did, to Germany, a short while ago, thinking that you would find a nation of philosophers and quiet *gemuetlich* beer-drinking burghers, you would have found that there are still old castles and cathedrals and picture-galleries there, but that it is the new factories everywhere that stand out in the landscape and put the past into the background, just as it is the keen business man, and not the learned professor, who is the present type of German manhood. The average German is not a fat man, nor a slow-speaking one, but an alert fellow, a hard talker generally, with as lively a temper as the Latin races, and far keener than the average Latin in the pursuit of plans for industrial successes. Peasants in their gay costumes are no more typical of the Germany of to-day than are any other comic-opera characters.

The Germany of old is fading. They still sing "Lorelei" of summer nights, and there still are ruins along the Lorelei's hills sufficiently ruinous to realize the illusions of a sixteen-year-old girl. Nevertheless, it is not the Lorelei that the men who sail the Rhine look for now. What

they are looking for is a Pan-German Rhine that shall carry German commerce from its Swiss head-waters down the broad river into the Low Countries and out through the Rhine delta over the Seven Seas. The entire lower Rhineland has become an industrial zone that can be compared only to Pittsburg and its environing district. In mass production the American centre is away ahead of the German, because our ore deposits are still near to, or in many cases above, the surface; but while we are, or have been until lately, content with making billets, ingots, wire bolts, nuts, and the other raw or crude materials of commerce, the Germans have gone in for more thorough and finished work. Last year we, the world's greatest steel-makers, paid to the small German nation several scores of millions of dollars for finished steel tools and instruments. Years ago they threw themselves into the work of training chemists and chemical engineers, with the result that at the last census it was found that the United States is paying Germany nearly a million dollars every day for chemical products. If you go down to the miles upon miles of wharves that make of Hamburg a greater port than New York, you will find piled high on the wharves and in the warehouses thousands upon thousands of bales of cotton which our Southern states are selling at ten cents a pound or less to the Germans, and which we are buying back from them at four, five, six, and seven times the price originally obtained for it. The significant thing about the Rhine District in particular is that here you do not find any such city as Pittsburg in this country, or Birmingham in England. Cities of moderate size blend into one another in an almost continuous chain of plants and residences. They have, of course, made us appear like children by comparison with their intelligent planning of cities. Duesseldorf, of which one hears so often as the model city for our people to pattern after in city planning, despite its cleanliness and attractive promenades and green spaces in the poorer quarters, is one of the great factory towns of this Rhine District.

There is only one section of America—from Wilmington, Delaware, to Portland, Maine—which even approaches the German industrial zones in density of industrial activity, and they are both gainers and losers by their greater concentration. For the Germans have had the good sense to make use of the great areas of open country available beyond the larger cities as well as near to the smaller towns for building up plants of low daily capacity. These small establishments are in their great numbers huge national assets. Why should they need high daily capacity when they are able to buy unfinished products, if not raw material, from us and from the other new continents and sell them at the high prices they are to-day commanding?

The absence of tall buildings in the business sections of the larger cities is especially noteworthy because of the intensity rather than extensiveness that marks German commerce. The reason for this seems to be

that in Germany everything is so thoroughly connected up into a system that there is no need for any huge clots in the circulation. Trusts are under the special protection of Government itself; immunity baths are unnecessary, in fact unheard of, for the Government regulates them as parts of the national engine of offense. The entire point of view of the Imperial Government is that of commerce, for commerce alone is the road along which Germany can travel to success. The stores of vigor and rough strength had been depleted in the Teuton peasant of the last century and the century before by decimating wars, and the world had grown to hold the German cheap, thought him heavy of wit quite as they pictured him clumsy of body. Now it is the stored-up vigor of peasantry and burghers, informed with the rich imaginative energy of the race, that is making the German Empire truly imperial through its success in world-commerce. In no other country will you find so many good linguists, and along the Riviera, on the coast of Africa, or on the German ships that ply around the world, you will find quite as many German as American *nouveaux riches*.

It is interesting to notice that the German people think of the New World in terms of South America quite as much as in terms of our country. Their young men go out to the capitals of the rich southern republics to study the markets, open branch houses, or, as in Sao Paolo, become land-holders. He, the German merchant, prints his catalogues in the language of the people he wishes to sell to, and tells them that if he has not got what they want, he will make what they want. Is it any wonder that he took the markets of our own Continent away from us?

All this discussion of German mercantile success is only a way of saying that the Germans respect, often to a naïve extent, the expert. Does a man show capacity in any sort of business, profession, art, or science? His head is no sooner raised above the mass than the omniscient Government has noted him. He is given one of many carefully graded titles or decorations. There is a German verb *streben* which has no English equivalent. It means to try hard and continuously, and that perhaps expresses better than anything else the German national attitude towards life. The American tries hard, too, and we get there too; but Americans are like the express elevator—you never know when it is going to shoot up, but you are certain that when it does, it will go fast, and (more than likely) will soon be down again. The German method of work reminds you more of the steel-riveter that you hear with its iron pertinacity, hammering and hammering from dawn till dark. That spirit, it is needless to add, informs the man in the factory quite as completely as in the army.

When you go south into the beautiful land of Bavaria and come into touch with the southern people there, you see again startling combinations of factories, as modern as Chicago, backing up against castles and city

walls that were built nearly ten centuries ago. On the streets and in the cafés (that are the Germans' clubs), you see those same powerful, manly faces which Holbein and Dürer drew and painted in these very streets five and six centuries ago.

The Emperor himself—who is often as badly underestimated by the peoples of other countries as he is apt to overestimate himself—is wide-awake to the advantages of one-man rule. The very people whom his ancestors relied upon as their backers and supporters, that is, the great land-owners of the aristocracy, the Emperor does not hesitate to flout when he sees an advantage to Germany in doing so. While colonization plans were still hopeful, and while he thought that Germany's chances lay that way, he made no bones about putting a Jew at the head of the Ministry of Colonies and giving him a free hand and free access to the royal and imperial purse, so that he might carry out his plans. Now that the African wars have shown how ill fitted for governing subject races the Germans are, all efforts are bent on establishing Germany's supremacy by means of the leadership of world-trade. These efforts were not relinquished even when war with the world hove in view. German banks, German railways, German cables, German technical, industrial, and medical training schools, German newspapers, and, in the case of Turkey, China, and South American countries, the German system and German instruction in the military arts, are all means to the one end: control of the world's trade as far as is possible by Germans. To considerable extent, the Kaiser has turned away politically in recent years from the great conservative land-holders who have their huge estates in East Prussia, Silesia, Saxony, and other parts of the Empire, and has surrounded himself with a number of leaders of the industries and the great German kings of commerce. The Court is still composed almost entirely of the *Uradel*, i.e., the original nobility, and to them and their families go the preferred appointments in the Guards' Regiments, in the Court itself, and in the lists of those whom royalty entertains and is entertained by. But in the Navy, in the universities, in the Courts of Justice, in the lists of those who are continually being honored for signal achievement in commerce and industry, the aristocracy is entirely overshadowed by the burghers. Among the Kaiser's close advisers are men like Ballin, head of the great steamship line at Hamburg, who is a Jew, and the Krupps, who have only recently been slightly ennobled.

The power of wealth, which was until so lately always naturally in the hands of the aristocracy, has had just the same effect on German society as upon American customs. In every small town, you will find palatial mansions erected by some newly enriched distiller, or brewer, or store-keeper, while the numbers of aristocrats who live in ill-kept chateaux, in real poverty, is large and increasing; but one should not generalize and conclude that the German aristocracy is going to seed. The remarkably

thorough training and duty which the Army and Navy require is the making of many and many a man who would otherwise be without occupation or ambition. The learned professions, which have a social standing much higher than they enjoy in America, attract many men of noble blood. And it is only a question of time before the nobility break down the conservative conventions that have kept them out of manufacturing and trade, exactly as they did in England centuries ago.

The politics of Germany are confused by the numbers of factions, that is, small parties in Parliament. Actually, public opinion is composed of the usual conservative party (in the German case, there are several conservative parties which shade off one into the other,) and the liberals, who range all the way from Free Conservatives to People's Party, with the Clerical Catholic faction holding the balance between the two in voting power, as the latter generally have at least a hundred members. The Social Democrats, who range from eighty to a hundred and twenty men, are coming away from their old irreconcilable line of action to more and more frequent coalitions with the outspoken liberal parties. If the suffrage were universal, there can be no question that the Social Democrats would control Parliament, and on this account Germany sticks to the property rights' theory of votes. It was the Socialist lion, Bebel, the one real German orator of the last part of the nineteenth century, who, almost single-voiced, awoke the sleeping giant, Labor, and fixed a great gulf between the sullen, underpaid workingman and the rest of Germany. The Socialist Party is, however, not made up almost entirely of the laboring class. The "lower middle classes" bordering upon Labor—artisans, school-teachers, even petty government officials—and the intellectuals who see the threadbare spots in the feudal system by which Germany is still ruled, are all sturdy contributors to the ranks of the Socialists. From year to year the party who believe in revision rather than overturning the present system of society have been gaining strength in the councils of German Socialism at the cost of the obstinate believers in theoretic Socialism ("platform Socialists"). The thoroughly patriotic support given the government by the "Reds" in the present crisis cannot but bring them still further into the centre of the stage, rather than remain as gallery gods who only hoot the actors. The talk one hears of Germany becoming a republic, of the end of military power, is, the present writer believes, shallow. No nation whose emotions are warm and so close to the surface can help but feel a very strong personal loyalty to its ruler. The Crown Prince has but to show a part of the executive capacity and positive personal power of his father, and he will remain Kaiser.



CONINGSBY MARTLETT PAYS

By ROBERT EMMET MACALARNEY

CONINGSBY MARTLETT was one of the passengers saved when the S. S. *Pompeian* foundered off the Newfoundland Banks, after cutting down a schooner in the fog. To this day, the name of the schooner is a mystery, but she wreaked quick revenge upon the liner whose speeding in the murk had blotted her from the seas. Pumps kept the *Pompeian* afloat for a bare half-hour. There had been grim scenes on deck, things that made gruesome reading when the freighter *El Mocha* reached Sandy Hook with eighty men and women out of three hundred.

Martlett had walked down the gang-plank, out into West Street, paying no heed to reporters clamoring for details. He had taken a taxicab to the offices of Briggs & Martlett, in Broad Street.

Burke, the private detective, who hung around the reception hall to fend off cranks and agents, started.

"Why—you, sir?" he exclaimed. "We heard *El Mocha* would n't dock until to-night."

Young Martlett had his hand upon the knob of a door labelled, "Abner Martlett, Private." He regarded the detective keenly, including in his survey the popping eyes of an office-boy, and the furtive glance Miss Hastings, the spinster stenographer, flung at him as she emerged from the compartment of the junior partner, to disappear into a compartment of her own, whence suddenly came a sound of furiously tapping typewriter keys.

"Look here, Burke," said Coningsby Martlett, "is that the way you feel about it?"

The stout ex-Pinkerton crimsoned with apology. "Your father is all cut up," he blurted. "The wireless has been clacking. We're mighty glad to have you back safe and sound, sir."

Young Martlett turned the knob and shut the door behind him.

"Dad," he said, "I'm here!"

Abner Martlett, sixty-five and white-mustached, looked up from a pile of letters.

"Con," he asked, "there were women and children on the *Pompeian*, were n't there?"

It was the directness the son had met since the day he inquired about

his mother, and Abner Martlett had interpreted, as best he could for seven-year-old understanding, the a-b-c's of divorce. He had not spared himself in the course of the recital; even the child appreciated that. And afterward there had been unvarying bluntness between them, but bluntness blended with an affection which the banker's Wall Street cronies did not fathom.

"Sixty out of the eighty of us who were rescued were women and children," replied young Martlett.

His father leaned over the desk. "Con, three days can cook up a lot of ugly theories—about lifeboats and such things. It may sound brutal, Son, but the not knowing was almost too much for me. I'd find your name among the survivors—the papers box these things with devilish persistence on the front page—and I'd almost wish it were in the list of passengers reported lost. I'd not have been half uncertain then; I'd have felt like old Jerry Tucker. Every telephone-call means some one's saying to him, 'We knew Dick had helped the women.'"

"Dick Tucker went forward after the collision," said Coningsby Martlett. "It was too foggy to see for more than a few feet. I don't know what became of him."

"He was n't picked up?"

"No, sir. He was n't one of the eighty aboard *El Mocha*."

"How about it?" asked the banker, putting his arm upon his son's shoulder.

"How about what, Dad?"

"You played the game, boy?"

Young Martlett returned his father's gaze steadily. "There were no women left where I was," he answered. "I helped lower three boats with women in them; then, when a half-empty one, with nobody but stewards and stokers in it, pulled alongside and they yelled to me to jump, I did."

It was Burke who rapped, putting head and one shoulder within. "There's a bunch of newspaper fellas out here," he announced.

"Send them in," ordered Abner Martlett. "No use trying to dodge them. Might as well get this over with now." He paused, staring doubtfully at the frowning young man. "Whatever you say, remember Dick Tucker was a hero. There's Jerry Tucker to think of. Come right in, gentlemen! This is my son, who got in on *El Mocha*. Tell them your story, Con."

The evening papers made a hero out of Richard Tucker, who had gone forward in the fog when the *Pompeian's* smoke-room shuddered with the rest of the ship. Somehow, in the chronicling, the reporters made a hero out of young Martlett as well.

Burke, the ex-Pinkerton, bought an *Evening Gloat* extra and absorbed the first page with a dropping jaw. There was a picture of his employer's

son, in polo togs, taken at Narragansett the year before, which served as a nucleus for the interview.

"Gee!" muttered the stout detective, "there's nothing like going to it right away! If you've got to grab a bumble-bee, do it quick!"

As for the original of the polo photograph, he became conscious of being a Part of the News when the butler, apparently carelessly, laid a copy of a late edition upon the library table. Young Martlett, outwardly calm, had just sauntered downstairs for dinner.

"God!" he cried; his father glanced at the head-lines.

"Never mind, Con," he advised. "You get used to notoriety; I did. First there was the divorce, then that Throughboard Air dummy-director rumpus, and when the Ninetieth National went under, in 1907, they were even yapping about trying to indict me for Brook's crookedness. It's the price you pay for doing things that get into the limelight."

"But this is n't any time for printing circus-posters!" exclaimed his son. "There are drowned people out there in the fog; they won't sink for days with life-preservers on—*El Mochó's* skipper said so. And here's a Sunday-supplement polo picture of me, in the middle of a lot of braggadocio I never said."

"It will please Jerry Tucker," said Abner Martlett soothingly. "You and Dick were chums. You've done the second best thing one friend can do for another: you've written his epitaph as staunchly as old Dr. Johnson wrote Oliver Goldsmith's. It's been tough, though. I can imagine how you feel."

"It's been nightmare," the young man muttered.

"You can forget about a nightmare. Better run down to Palm Beach next week. A change is what you need."

Coningsby Martlett took his father's advice. It was April before he returned to town—and the Carston. He felt as awkward as a new member when he entered the familiar lounging rooms. The sound of the bell as he summoned a boy seemed surprisingly loud.

It had been different in Florida. One can always fit into the moods of a pleasure resort, after a dip into the spectacular; the frame of mind of a fun-hunting province is tolerant of anything save discomfort. There had been no raised eyebrows when the heir to the Martlett money appeared on the heels of the tragedy of the *S. S. Pompeian*. Merely a first day echo of "Lucky devil, were n't you, Con?" or "It must have been perfectly horrible, Mr. Martlett!" It was due only to the discreetness of the man who censored the resort news telegraphed north that the *Evening Gloat* did not feature him again—this time as an exponent of the tango, upon the veranda of the Mossmere, with Miss Millicent Urquhart as partner. He was tanned and wholesome-looking when he entered the Carston portals.

"Hello!" said Rawlins Richardson, coming in with Fordie Heather-

ton. He shook hands, but Heatherton merely nodded and moved toward the billiard room. And after shaking hands Richardson appeared at a loss to continue conversation.

"I have n't seen you since the—it, you know," he said. "Pretty nasty, that—eh?"

"Are you chaps going to regard me as salvage forever?" snapped Martlett. "Want to play auction?"

"Can't," replied Richardson. "Billiards on with Heatherton. See you at Squadron drill Thursday, I suppose."

Of course this all wore off in time; everything does. Young Martlett was again in the saddle for the Narragansett Freebooters that summer; nor were débutantes denied watching him resume his winter task of cotillon leading.

In the weeks immediately following the sinking of the *Pompeian*, many men and women, frozen in their life-preservers, had been picked up. But the body of Dick Tucker was never recovered. Coningsby Martlett was the heaviest contributor to the Richard Tucker Athletic Fund at Waverly School, where his chum had prepared for college. On the bronze gateway, through which eager boys with their mothers and sisters, and as eager and even more enjoying alumni, now stream when the big game is played in November with Hotchkiss, are the words an *Evening Gloat* reporter put into the mouth of Coningsby Martlett the day *El Mocho* reached her West Street dock—"He did what he could."

"My dear, it was just like Rugby and Eton and those delightfully behind-the-times English schools," declared Miss Millicent Urquhart—she had been present at the dedication of Richard Tucker Field, as the fiancée of the chairman of the gift committee. "You know, what we have always lacked in America is atmosphere. We need more memorials to generals and admirals and folks like that. It's positively stimulating just to find a D.A.R. tablet when you stop at a road-house for luncheon while you're motoring; don't you feel that way? Of course Coningsby did just what poor Dick Tucker did, only he was luckier. And I'd rather have him here than have an athletic field named after him. But he's never been the same. He even wanted to stop leading cotillons!"

Mrs. Martin Hemingway happened to be in the group which listened to Miss Urquhart. "Quite in the spirit of the memorial tablet," she remarked in the silence that ensued. "That is in the past tense, though, while Coningsby employs the present—'He does what he can.'"

"Even a spoiled old czarina," whispered Miss Orton to Percy Winslow, "has no right to use a bludgeon."

But Miss Urquhart, being genuinely in quest of divertisement herself, never tarried near one phase of utterance or contemplation long enough to analyze it. It is doubtful if she would have construed the grim matron's reply, in any event.

That very week young Martlett employed a new valet.

"Why did you discharge Hart?" asked his father—they were motor-ing to the office. "He was pretty old, and he may have hated sitting up late for you, but——"

"He'd begun to drink. I found my decanters empty nearly all the time. And this man came to me because he knew me; he was hard up. I gave Hart six months' wages. 'Ricks' is the new man's name. He was a steward on the *Pompeian*; waited on me at table, told me he'd been used to living with gentlemen."

"Ricks?" exclaimed the banker. "I remember that name in those infernal front-page lists of survivors!"

"He was in my boat," said Coningsby Martlett. "In fact, I may say he saved my life; it was he who hauled me over the gunwale after I'd jumped."

"You did n't tell the newspapers about him, boy?"

"It was only a little thing in an army of horrors," replied the young man. "Oh, I paid him well enough for what he did. He's grateful for the place, too. But there's something else, Dad, I've been wanting to tell you for several days. What would you say if some one told you I was going to marry Millicent Urquhart?"

"You mean it?"

"We're engaged. But we want you to approve."

"You get five hundred thousand and the Westchester place on your wedding day," said the white-mustached banker. "That'll show you whether I approve. She's an artificial little chit, Con—no, don't get stuffy with your dad—but I want you to marry in your own crowd. This business of importing domesticity from the outside does n't work. Go ahead; let Mrs. Martlett give parties of her own, instead of going to them. But you must rear a family. There's got to be a grandson who can come down-town and go into the firm, after his granddaddy has made use of that new mausoleum. Will she stand for my calling her Milly?"

"That's what I call her, Dad," laughed young Martlett.

The Leonards gave a dinner dance at their place on Long Island in honor of the engaged pair. It was one of those September evenings when the moon touches the mist scarf over the Sound and turns it yellow. Every one was very jolly; a lot of fellows Martlett knew, who had been playing in the Meadow Club tennis tournament at Southampton, had come over, and Miss Millicent Urquhart was extremely happy, but even more satisfied. It is nice to have one's future assured comfortably in one's own set. She recalled several finishing-school acquaintances who had ventured beyond the pale of environment to experiment in matrimony; their example had not been stimulating. She was fond of Coningsby Martlett in her way; what there was of her shallow ability to care, he possessed utterly.

They sat upon the veranda railing, while he smoked, listening to the beat of the tango within. Débutantes and shopgirl belles from Slacy's fall under the same spell beside the sea; there is no distinction in appreciating a September night alongshore.

"Is n't the moon pretty in the mist?" asked the future Mrs. Martlett.

Her fiancé was forgetting to puff at his cigarette. The flush of dancing had vanished; his face was drawn; she wondered if he were ill.

"That's fog out there. It seems pretty to us, but it was n't pretty when the *Pompeian* went down!" He grasped her roughly, leaving finger-marks upon her bare shoulders. "Milly, don't tell any one, but there are dead men and women out there; they've got life-preservers on, and they can't sink! *El Mocho's* captain said so!"

The girl drew away from voice and touch. "Coningsby, you *have* been drinking!" she cried. "And you promised!"

But he danced the next number with her as if he had not remembered her flight from the porch; she found herself thinking she had imagined it. They were married a fortnight afterward.

Within a year their friends were saying, "What's the matter with Coningsby Martlett? Have you noticed how starey-eyed he's getting? Tough on the little Urquhart girl."

But it was not only the drinking—Millicent Martlett was keen enough to diagnose that. The drinking was merely a symptom of the other thing—whatever that was. Ricks, the valet, knew; but she dared not ask him. She felt afraid of this softly treading shadow of her husband; she grew to loathe his cat-like deftness, she hated the mask of vacuity with which he screened his face; underneath his deference she sensed fangs.

"Get rid of him, won't you, Connie?" she asked, shortly after they had returned from the wedding journey.

"Who—Ricks? Why, he's a splendid servant, Milly. And you forget—he saved me, really, when the *Pompeian* went down." He shivered as he held her.

"Please, don't! Never mention that horrid old wreck again!" she begged.

"You can't help mentioning things after you've been a part of them," he answered. "Listen, girl! The ship's doctor stood next to me at the rail. We'd been playing bridge when the blow came. And he turned in the fog and asked for a match. 'Nicotine will help just now,' he said. I am not sure, but he may have smiled in the mist; all of the deck-lights were n't out yet. Then he tossed the match overside; it was quite calm, you know; I could hear the stick hiss as it touched the water. 'Looks like a cold sand supper for most of us, Martlett,' he said. Just like that, Milly! 'Looks like a cold sand supper for most of us.' And I'd been bidding three in royals not five minutes before. The

looks of that auction hand stuck to me in the lifeboat, until *El Mocho* picked us up. I had four honors!"

Mrs. Martlett had freed herself as Ricks padded into the room.

"Beg pardon, sir," said the valet.

"I detest that man!" she had cried as he padded out again. "Please, Connie!"

"I can't," her husband had groaned.

At the Carston Club they merely nodded when *Town Talk* said that the Coningsby Martletts had separated. Abner Martlett had seen it coming, even from his brief visits to Westchester.

"Too bad, boy!" he grumbled. "Come down-town to the Street for a year or two. It will buck you up. It's just as well that I'm not a granddaddy, after all, I guess. And lose that undertaker valet. If you feel you owe him a ransom, pension him and send him away. He gives me the creeps!"

The stout ex-Pinkerton, sentry of the outer offices of Briggs & Martlett, whistled softly to himself when he got a glimpse of his employer's son.

"Gee!" he whispered. "He may have left *El Mocho* at her West Street dock, but he took a bit of baggage along with him, at that. And boozing ain't doing it a bit of good, either."

The Head-master of Waverly School invited Coningsby Martlett to come up to the Berkshires in June. It was the first year, since the Richard Tucker Field had been given, that Hotchkiss had been beaten at both football and baseball. Rawlins Richardson went along in the Martlett motor.

"It was like this," he told Fordie Heatherton and Percy Winslow, at the Carston, three days later. "Connie insisted upon taking his blank-faced valet, although it was inciting the prep school youth to mayhem and arson, I warned him; prep school kids ought to see a valet about as often as a dinosaur. Ricks did nothing but look after a black leather box, big enough to carry three hats. 'Is it full of loving-cups for the teams?' I asked. 'No,' he snapped; 'and it is n't a question box, either.'"

"That was rather neat, for Coningsby," said Heatherton. "I've heard about it myself, though. He takes it everywhere, even for week-ends; and he's setting an impossible millionaire custom, always bringing his own man along. He turned down the Staceys' bid because Brock Stacey told him he was n't giving a house-party for valets."

"Well, he may need that box for his haberdashery," continued Richardson. "He went about Waverly arrayed gorgeously; the kids just naturally followed like a lot of sheep. Between us, I think they admired his striped flannels and scarfs more than the fact that he'd been a fellow hero with poor old Dick Tucker. But they rallied to the other thing nobly in the chapel on Class Day. They gave Coningsby—and me; I was in the background, blushing becomingly—the locomotive cheer, and the

half-locomotive. They've got a lot of new yells, swiped from Princeton, since you and I were there, Percy. And then the Head-master, old Jonesy, tipped Coningsby the high sign.

"He looked serious enough, facing all those youngsters. Tell you what it is, you never appreciate just how terrifyingly eager kids can be until you view them in bulk from a platform. I felt ashamed of all the bar-checks I'd signed, and the auction money I'd tossed away. 'I was a friend of Dick Tucker,' Coningsby began. 'Dick Tucker, Waverly, 1900.' How the little beggars applauded! 'We were on the *Pompeian* together, three years ago. You know what happened. Dick Tucker did the best he could.' That last is the sentence on the memorial gateway tablet, you know; it's got to be a school slogan. They fairly raised the roof, the Head-master standing and leading."

"Well, get to it, Rick," grumbled Percy Winslow. "I know he mused it up, for a cub cousin of mine who managed to burglarize a diploma hinted, in almost well-bred fashion for a cub, that Coningsby fumbled the ball."

"He simply had hysterics, right then and there," explained Richardson. "And, as if conjured out of thin air, that pasty-faced echo, Ricks, appeared and led him away. I went with them, while old Jonesy covered our exit with some gush about the memory of the tragedy being still fresh enough to upset the school's living partner in that glorious *Pompeian* heroism."

"He'd been sopping up too much Scotch, I suppose," remarked Heatherton.

"He did n't show it if he had," replied Richardson. "But he was drinking hard enough to satisfy a bankrupt bartender afterward. I came home by train, for, when Connie is too maudlin to interfere, that man of his acts as if he were named Martlett, too."

In a few more months the only country houses inviting Coningsby Martlett for week-ends were those where he had not visited since he had acquired Ricks and the black hat-box. Once in a while he would throw off the cloak of alcohol and depression, displaying the charm that had made him the most popular junior member of the Carston.

Just about two years from the September night when Miss Millicent Urquhart had watched the moon turn Long Island Sound's mist-scarf yellow, Martlett met his wife at Mrs. Martin Hemingway's. As a result, Miss Gwendolyn Orton was as indignant as she had been when Mrs. Hemingway had wet-blanketed Miss Urquhart's girlish enthusiasm over Waverly School's memorial gateway. But, actually, Mrs. Hemingway, society gorgon that she was, had devised a scheme which made her feel pleasantly virtuous. The Martlett incident had become annoying; why not glue together broken china? Such things had been done before. And what better place for readjustment than the Adirondacks? "Rough

House," the Hemingway bungalow, was really a quadrangle of bungalows, with Sacandaga lapping a beach preserved to the water's edge along its entire twenty-five miles. Invitations to "Rough House" were always welcomed, for the label of the colony was the one hint of genuine roughing-it that a guest experienced; and among the attractions was the Hemingway chef, Manhattan's only *cordon bleu* who consents to immure himself in forest fastnesses during August.

Mrs. Martlett appeared the day after her husband. Thursby Carter, who drove a two-seated buckboard to the junction to pick her up, with Miss Orton beside him, bet a box of gloves that neither husband nor wife knew in advance of the other's coming. The bet has never been paid; without interrogating Mrs. Hemingway (bravado which no bungalow visitor has yet displayed), there was no way of deciding it. Martlett was in the group which surrounded the buckboard.

"Hello, Milly!" he said. "You're lucky; the last black-fly has gone, and the bass are biting splendidly."

"That's nice, Connie," his wife replied. "When did you come?"

"There's Twentieth Century poise for you," murmured Fordie Heatherton to his nearest neighbor. "The Stoics had nothing on little old New York."

"But it is n't exactly pretty, now, is it?" asked Rawlins Richardson, staring after the others. "Ossification is all right to keep you from making a side-show of yourself. But you want one little bit of live nerve wriggling around in you somewhere."

"You don't, nowadays, if you want to be a comfortable week-ender," mumbled Heatherton. "Have you heard the latest about Coningsby's black hat-box? The servants say he keeps some animal pet in it. One of the maids told Mrs. Heatherton it squeaked like a squirrel. Even the chef's been keeping an eye on the pantry, to see what Ricks carries off to feed to it; but so far he can't locate the pilfering."

"See here, Fordie," exclaimed Richardson, "maybe it's the thing in the black hat-box that made Millicent Urquhart leave him! Women are fussy about pets; I had a groom once whose wife quit him because he kept white mice."

The next morning Mrs. Hemingway herded most of her guests into wagonettes and drove, over corduroy, to Fawn, to have luncheon on the rocks. Thursby Carter and the Orton girl, whom young Carter intended to marry when she made up her mind, did not go. "Come over later, by canoe," their hostess had advised. "It's only a half-mile carry from Sacandaga, and it will be a nice paddling back by starlight."

Mrs. Martlett reported a headache and slept late. Her husband had tramped off to Mossy Fly for trout, shortly after dawn. Carter, Miss Orton, and the Martletts had luncheon together; Ricks served, the butler having migrated with the Fawn party. Martlett was moody and called for

Scotch and soda more than once; Miss Orton, being very young, chattered a deal more than was necessary to cover up the awkwardness of the meal. As for young Carter, he kept an eye on Mrs. Martlett; he saw terror beginning to film her eyes. With the dessert, Martlett muttered something about being tired; the others could hear him clumping overhead—the sleeping-rooms of the main bungalow opened on a gallery. Ricks had tiptoed after his employer.

"I really prefer *Genée*," Miss Orton was declaring, in the high key which juveniles inevitably employ when seeking to carpet the bare spots of table talk.

The crack of a pistol, from above, punctuated her remark like a full-linked period. Mrs. Martlett pitched forward upon the table; the brown tint of creamed coffee from her overturned cup spread soaking across the linen; she had fainted.

Thursby Carter seized Miss Orton by the wrist. "Come along!" he cried. "I want a witness for what's upstairs!"

"I'll go, Thursby," replied Miss Orton, who suddenly seemed to have dispensed with juvenility. They clambered the clattery steps together. Through an open door, they saw Ricks kneeling, cramming shut the lid of the black hat-box. Coningsby Martlett lay upon his back, a thin trickle from his temple staining the blue rag rug.

The valet arose. "He's dead, sir," he announced. "He's been trying to do it more than once. It was either going crazy or a bullet. Did she hear?" He pointed downstairs.

"We all heard," gasped Miss Orton.

"Then she knew what it meant," said the valet. "He hated her for not hating him. He never forgave her for that."

The white-faced servant spoke in a monotone. He displayed no emotion; he seemed to regard the incident as closed, to be waiting for this curious young man and young woman to withdraw.

"Ricks," cried Thursby Carter, "there's something queer about this. Where's the pistol?"

"In there," the valet answered, glancing toward the black leather box.

"Open it," young Carter ordered.

"Better not, sir," Ricks objected. "It won't be pretty."

"The coroner at Northville will have to come in on this, you fool!" said Carter. "You can't hush this up."

He was bending, wrenching at the straps; the lid flew back. There was nothing in the box save the motor and horn of a talking-machine, with a wax record. The pistol lay beside them. Ricks reached down and would have broken the disc across his knee, but Carter stopped him.

"No, you don't!" he snarled. "Gwen, this is the thing the servants heard squeak."

"Every night just before he went to bed," the servant explained

calmly. "Mr. Martlett did n't sleep, not unless he took something. You don't understand; it was his penance: he did n't drown with the others. And, being a gentleman, that ate into him like acid. I was only a steward, and grateful as a rat for a bit of plank to keep afloat. I won't break it. Let me show you!"

He took the wax disc from young Carter and put it beneath the needle. There were the premonitory screechings out of which a phonograph record always emerges.

"This is the confession of a coward!"

The valet changed the speed of the revolving cylinder, with the nice attention he might have paid to a bit of ragtime.

"Because I have seen fit to live, instead of die," said the voice, "I shall listen to this every day. There were no heroes on the *Pompeian*. I was a coward, Dick Tucker was a coward, Ricks, my present valet, was a coward; every stoker and fireman in the boat from which *El Mocho* took us was a coward; many of them were thieves."

The record whirled confusedly here. Ricks nodded. "All quite right, sir; all quite right," he muttered. "I took a gold watch myself that night."

"Hush, Gwen!" whispered young Carter. "It's going on."

"But of all these cowards, so far as I know, I was the worst," continued the voice. "There were a sick woman and her daughter in the stateroom three doors from mine. I knew it; Ricks knew it. It would n't have done any good to tell the stokers and firemen in the boat; they might have rowed off without us while we went below. It was very foggy; and the steerage passengers were trying to break up on the main deck."

Again the record paused.

"I told you it ate into him like acid," mumbled the valet, wagging his head. "He won't talk again for a quarter-minute; he must have sweated blood making this."

"And—so—we left them—below," said the cylinder jerkily. "They sank with the ship. The others had life-preservers on—they would float—for days and days—*El Mocho's* captain said so. This is the story of a coward. In a way—it makes up for not dying—with the rest. The women and children who died are better off—much better off than I. Conscience is n't enough—listening every day is better. The woman was sick—she could not have lived many years. But there was the girl—she was only nineteen. I gave her her chance. I asked her to go with Ricks and me. I often see her eyes; they drove me out of the stateroom. I never knew—their names. But she—the girl—was brave."

The record ran down with a rasp.

"You blackmailed him! That was why he hired you!" said young Carter.

"He never called it blackmail," replied the valet. "Of course I had

a claim on him. We were all yellow that night. The Tucker boy was loony with fear. He ran aft, knocking over passengers right and left, yelling that he had money and wanted to buy a lifeboat."

The valet stared at his dead employer; his lips licked back in a half-grin. "And they put up a memorial tablet to Tucker at his school," he went on. "There was a motto on it, and all the kids cheered him. Aw, what difference does it make, when there ain't enough boats to go around? It has n't made me a bug. Yet it ate into him like acid. He told his wife when they came back from their wedding trip. And because she did n't hate him for being a coward, he hated her. You see, he was near crazy then. That's why she left him—he made her listen to the talking machine every night. She'd have gone dippy if she'd stayed. It ate into her like acid, too—that record. But it never bothered me."

An hour later Thursby Carter and Miss Orton were paddling a canoe off Birch Point.

"Is it deep enough here?" she asked.

"Thirty feet—and I've got it loaded with a few stones besides."

Young Carter slid Coningsby Martlett's black leather box into the water; the merest ripple and a few bubbles told where it had sunk.

"But I did n't destroy the record, Gwen. Somehow, I felt those words ought to stand; they were penance, you know."

"Milly is wonderful," said the girl. "The funeral is to be from their old home."

Burke, the stout ex-Pinkerton, whistled again when he read the *Evening Gloat's* dispatch, telling how Coningsby Martlett had been killed while cleaning his revolver at Sacandaga. The front page reprinted that Narragansett polo photograph.

"It got him at last," said Burke to himself. When he paid off Ricks, he led the chalk-faced valet into the outer corridor of the Throughboard Building. "Now beat it, far away," he counselled. "The open season for blackmail is over. And if I ever hear of you turning loose one little blab, I'll see whether I can't do a bit of railroading up the river."

"I'm going to ship as steward again," answered Ricks. "You need n't be afraid. I was half fond of him myself. It ate into him like acid. That's funny, ain't it? It never worried me."

The morning old Abner Martlett followed a hearse to Greenwood, Henderson Jones, M.A., Head-master of Waverly School, faced from the chapel platform two hundred eager boys.

"And so," remarked the Head-master, "this tablet will always remain an inspiration to the school; perhaps your own sons may feel the uplift of the sentence in bronze relief upon the gateway of Richard Tucker Field—'He Did What He Could.'"

"There will be recitations this afternoon as usual, young gentlemen. You will march out quietly, please."

THE STREET OF STAIRS

By ELEANOR MERCEIN KELLEY

AUTHOR OF "TOYA THE UNLIKE," "THE PRIVATEER," "THE HERMITAGE," ETC.

THE Misses Wilkins stood transfixed upon the deck of their vessel, gazing with sober ecstasy upon the continent of Africa; upon Algiers, rising white and gleaming among its tropical green; upon the noble dome of Notre Dame d'Afrique, outlined far up and beyond against the burning blue of sea and sky. Unheeded, turbaned Arabs came and went with their trays of fragrant violets, while a magnificent creature in a burnous plied a thriving trade in silver jewelry of the sort that leaves its mark indelibly upon the skin. It was Mystery that lay before them, Mystery and Romance. Above the usual noises of a landing, came to their ears the faint wailing of an Arab flute.

"The voice of the Orient!" breathed Miss Molly.

"I don't know whether Africa's the Orient or not," said the elder Miss Jane. "Let's hurry and eat breakfast. We really ought to, you know. It's paid for." But even as she spoke, the feet of her sister were obeying the lure of that Arab flute; and her own irresistibly followed.

Well in advance of their shipmates, the Misses Wilkins panted up the steep terrace to the town, accompanied by a cavalcade of burnoused infants, turning continuous handsprings, which discovered a startling amount of person.

"Is n't it too Robert Hichensy for anything?" puffed Miss Molly. "See that lovely old man in an opera cloak, with a pink suit underneath! And here's a veiled person coming, with a crocodile tattooed on her forehead. O-oh, Sister! There's a baby in her basket with the vegetables, a tiny little brown one!"

She would have stopped to pay spinster's homage to young Araby, but her sister plucked her forward. "Come on—let's hurry." It was the slogan of her clan; and it had sounded remorselessly—and still sounds—throughout the lands of the Old World.

"I suppose it's unfeeling to be enjoying poor Cousin Charles's legacy so much," panted Miss Molly, with a dutiful sigh, "but oh, Sister, suppose he had n't died! Suppose we'd never seen *anything*! And are n't you glad our last day of Abroad should be Africa? It is so much queerer than Europe, so much more thrilling to remember. There's more—chiaros-

curo." She brought out the word with some diffidence and a sidelong glance, but the elder accepted it without question.

"It's quite wonderful the way you pick up foreign languages," she commented. "After those five days in Paris, we shall not have to take a guide here at all."

She was mistaken, however. At the top of the terrace two eager gentlemen awaited them, one of whom disposed of the other by means of a neat nudge in the solar plexus, and announced himself to the ladies as their chosen companion.

"De Angleesh—ah, but *parfaitement* I spik him!" he assured them, clasping his hat to his bosom while with a magnificent gesture he laid Algiers at their feet. "All t'ings I make to see: dose Mosque, *les jardins*, *la danse Arabe*, *la bazaar*, *les Ouleds-naïls*"—he leered discreetly—"tutti, tutti, Signore! Vraiment, le hull show—*nicht war?*" (Miss Molly recognized in him a fellow polyglot.)

The ladies hurried on, ignoring him in their best manner. But the cavalcade hampered progress. It fawned upon them, fingering their spotless spinster raiment with hands far from spotless; gazing into their faces with avid smiles; murmuring certain caressing obscenities which fortunately were not included in Miss Molly's five-day research into the French language.

"Evidently," sighed Miss Wilkins, "these creatures expect something."

"There's that Italian centesimo we had left over," whispered Miss Molly. "Would it be quite honest to give them that?"

"Hand it here," said Miss Wilkins. With a masterly sweep of the arm, she cast it well into the street. The cavalcade pursued it to a man. Even the guide fought his way, kicking and cuffing, toward the rolling copper. The Wilkins sisters slipped briskly around a corner.

After some moments of breathless hurrying, they paused; and a voice spoke at their elbow, sad, reproachful: "*V'là, Mesdames! Zis money is not French, hein?*"

It was the victorious guide, holding out upon his palm the last of the centesimi.

Without a word, Miss Wilkins exchanged it for coin of the realm, and they pursued their way, the chosen companion irrevocably at heel.

"*V'là, Mesdames! Les magazines Arabes*," he murmured presently.

They passed along a narrow alleyway, lined with tiny open shops like the booths at a fair, where men sat at work, or praying; or sleeping. One was embroidering a robe, handling with deft rapidity many needlefuls of gay silk. The ladies turned their eyes away in surprise, rather shocked to discover a man in such unmasculine occupation. But other men were stringing beads, making slippers; still others wove the pliable deep baskets in which Algeria carries its burdens: babies, street-refuse, rock, clothes,

coal—anything that may be carried at all by humans, who are so much cheaper than beasts. One grave ancient sat cross-legged before a great copper kettle, which he stirred absently at intervals, gazing beyond into Infinity.

There sounded a slow tinkling, as of cow-bells, accompanied by a weird and strident call.

"Oh, *la-la! Ça va bien!*"—the guide was proud, gratified. It was evidently he himself who had done this thing. "*Il y a un caravan* which approaches itself. *V'là, Mesdames!*"

It was not a caravan, but it was a camel. Spellbound, the ladies watched the passage of a genuine ship of the desert, languidly stepping, its supercilious head well lifted, the howdah and its shrouded occupant perilously a-way. Camels they had met with before, in circuses; but not just off their native heath, as it were, not redolent of the very breath of the Sahara.

"It is a silly-looking beast," said Miss Wilkins, who felt it to be her American duty and privilege to pass judgment on the offerings of the Old World. "It's silly-looking, and it smells."

Undoubtedly the breath of the Sahara was akin to the breath of a goat-shed; but Miss Molly was beyond the reach of iconoclasm.

"To think," she whispered, "that in a little over two weeks we'll be back in Watertown, Wisconsin!"

"There's still New York," said her sister.

"New York—*pah!*"

What had New York to offer in comparison with this wonder-city; its bougainvillea-draped houses, upon whose roofs the beauties of the harem appear at sundown; its sun-kissed, fragrant winds from that sea of romance, the Mediterranean; its streets which echo to the passing of the World? All nations jostled them: tourists from Germany, dressed unaccountably for hunting; English in helmets, with faces that showed their determination to be interested in nothing; Turks in fezzes; cuirassiers twirling their mustaches irresistibly at the ladies; everywhere proud Arabs, carrying their heads above the riff-raff with something of the superciliousness of the camel.

For forty-odd years Miss Molly had been a looker-on at life, a mere bystander; yet she still nourished in her breast the young belief that some day, somewhere, something was going to happen to her. Here the thing seemed imminent. She expected to find it around every corner. She knew that she was treading upon the very heels of Adventure.

"Sister! Did you see that Zouave?" she bridled. "He positively ogled me!"

"*Mais oui,*" murmured the guide gallantly. "Why not?"

Miss Wilkins paused. "Molly," she whispered, "we've got to lose this creature. Why, he may be running up a tariff on us, like a taxi-

meter. I know!—we'll have him take us to a mosque, and leave him at one door while we slip out another."

It seemed feasible. In French which should have shamed his own efforts, Miss Molly said, "*Garçon, nous désirons une mosque.*"

It appeared that a mosque was the one thing above all others which he yearned to present to Mesdames as a souvenir.

Alas for Miss Wilkins's schemings! The Arab at the door indicated her boots with disfavor, and pointed out a row of foot-coverings left in his charge. "Nonsense! You can't expect *me* to run around barefoot," she said; and essayed to enter.

She was plucked back by the guide, all apology. "*C'est défendu, verboten!*" he urged; and went upon his knees to pluck agitatedly at her shoe-laces. She yielded to force, and stood forth presently in all the frankness of white-soled hosiery.

Miss Molly was aghast. "I c-can't, Sister—I can't! There's a hole in my toe!"

"Remember, my dear, these are not really *men*," admonished her sister, and entered. Miss Molly, as usual, followed.

The wide, sunny stillness of the mosque was stirred by faint whisperings of prayer. Men sat at ease, fingering great rosaries; or knelt, bending at frequent intervals to kiss the ground. An old beggar mended his rags in one corner, his lips steadily moving. The visitors passed, unnoted; there was not a flicker in the dark, melancholy eyes that stared through them, beyond them, lost in contemplation of the Absolute. It was as if the Wilkins ladies were not really women; they had ceased to exist. They were no more to these Moslems than motes dancing in a sunbeam. . . . The feeling was not altogether pleasant.

As they stood there in the whispering silence, far above them, thin and clear, sounded a single human voice. Before it finished speaking, every worshipper was prostrate, facing the East.

"Behol' *la muezzin!*" murmured a helpful voice. It was the guide, with an indecent amount of foot on view amid the remnant of his stockings.

In discouraged silence, Miss Wilkins allowed him to lace her into her common-sense boots again; but Miss Molly once more presented difficulties. Her shoes were of the buttoned sort; and there was no button-hook. There was not even its time-honored substitute, the wire hair-pin. The Misses Wilkins patronized bone. In vain the guide sacrificed gallant fingers.

"Aha!" hissed Miss Wilkins suddenly. "Here—give him this franc and tell him to go and buy us a button-hook. Then—you see?"

Miss Molly saw. She explained to the guide in pantomime, and he disappeared on the run. The ladies also disappeared on the run, in an opposite direction.

Through crowds they wriggled, scudded across streets, darted around corners, doubling and turning like a pair of elderly rabbits; Miss Wilkins in the lead, Miss Molly, somewhat retarded by her shoe-tops, flapping after. At last they drew up in the shelter of a great doorway, whose carvings were almost obliterated by age. Far as the eye could see, there was no guide. They had lost him. They had also lost themselves. The Mediterranean, which had hitherto served them as a landmark, seemed to have quite disappeared.

"Who cares!" panted Miss Wilkins.

Miss Molly said dramatically, "Alone in the Orient!" She knew that the adventure for which she had waited her forty-odd years was now upon her.

About them stretched a maze of crooked, narrow streets, ascending and descending. The one in which they stood was no more than a flight of twisting stairs. Overhead, tall houses rose so close together that the upper stories almost touched, and a mere rift of sky was visible. Above several of the ancient doorways small lights burned. In the semi-twilight, the accumulation of refuse on the stairs was not quite visible; but it was evident, nevertheless.

From a barred window opposite came a soft giggle, and the ladies, looking, met a pair of gleaming dark eyes, above which the brows were painted in a straight line across the forehead. The face, unshrouded by the veiling yashmak, was round as a child's, and very pretty. She pointed a finger at Miss Wilkins's tailored trimness, and demanded, "*Est que c'est un homme ou une dame, là?*" A shower of small missiles struck their retreating backs. Miss Molly picked up one of them. It appeared to be a sweetmeat. She bit into it recklessly, germs and all. It tasted of paregoric.

They became aware of a sound which they had heard for some time without quite realizing it, a sound which had welcomed them to Algiers: the thin wailing of an Arab flute. As they ascended, it grew louder. A Zouave, coming out of a door farther up, paused to stare insolently at them, and swaggered by, puffing his cigarette. During the moment that he held the door ajar, the flute had sounded clearly.

"It's in there. Oh, Sister, do you suppose it *could* be an Arab dance?"

Miss Wilkins paused. She tried the door. It opened under her touch. "Let's go in and see," she said calmly.

Through a long black passage, they emerged upon an inner court, surrounding which rose tier upon tier of arched and pillared galleries. After the dim street, the effect was of great color. Sunlight poured down upon the central well-head, upon whose curb basked tawny cats. Clotheslines stretched from gallery to gallery, flying bright garments. Several young women leaned over a balustrade, their hair unbound, chattering

with others below. All were unveiled, and clad in revealing chemise-like garments, confined about the hips with gaudy scarves. In one corner crouched an old crone, cooking over a brazier. Against the well-head sat the music maker—an ancient beggar, incredibly ragged, who turned upon the newcomers as they entered inflamed and horrible sockets from which the eye-balls appeared to have been gouged.

So much the Wilkins ladies saw, and would have willingly retired, but they were already surrounded by an increasing group of girls, exclaiming, giggling, uttering shrill phrases which the sisters did not understand, and yet felt, vaguely, to be derogatory.

"Do you suppose it's a girls' school?" breathed Miss Molly.

The tailor-made Jane attracted special attention. One damsel plucked up her skirt to examine the stout shoes, and even the stout calves, beneath. Another seized the spectacles from her nose and placed them upon her own, strutting about with the glee of a bad child. A third, a creature graceful as a cat, sidled against her caressingly, laid a languishing head on her shoulder, and began to stroke her cheek.

"Stop that! Behave yourself," said Miss Wilkins uneasily. "Molly, I believe this young hussy thinks I'm a man!"

Miss Molly was in difficulties herself. A glove had been filched from her; the brooch on her bosom, the miniature of a deceased forebear, was receiving an embarrassing amount of attention; somebody tugged steadily and firmly at her hat, much intrigued by the resistance of the hat-pins.

"*S'il vous plait*, don't! You're hurting me," she protested.

The crone who had been cooking pushed her way through the group, striking right and left with her crutch, and halted in front of her, peering up into her face with a gaze indescribably malignant. "*Hei! Chienne chrétienne!*" she hissed, and spat upon the ground.

Miss Molly began to be frightened. The heavy perfume from these close-pressing bodies made her faint. Wherever she looked there were bare arms and bosoms; cruel faces, whitened and tattooed; cruel black eyes, melancholy for all their mocking laughter. Suddenly she noticed among them one pair of eyes that were not black. She looked again. The face was like the others, with lips thickly carmined and eyebrows painted in a straight bar across the forehead. But the eyes were blue.

"That's queer," she thought. "I did n't know there were blonde Orientals." And then she cried out sharply, "Help, help, Sister! They're pinching me! They're pulling away my shopping-bag!"

"Get out your hat-pin," commanded the intrepid Jane. "We'll stand back to back and keep 'em off."

A diversion arose. The blind man, who throughout the commotion had wailed steadily at his flute, suddenly leaped to his feet with a howl of anathema. A girl had snatched the flute, and was dancing away before him, just out of reach, while he stumped after on his wooden leg, blindly

clutching. It was rather a piteous sight, well calculated to appeal to the risibles of its audience. Amid peals of merriment, the Christian dogs were for the moment forgotten.

Straight toward them danced the mischief-maker, the beggar stumbling after; and as she passed she said in very clear English, "You get out of this, quick! The door behind you!"

The sisters found themselves in the Street of Stairs, down which they stumbled, somewhat dazed, smoothing their ruffled plumage as best they might. At that moment, the lost guide would have been as welcome to their eyes as the first olive-branch to the dove from the Ark.

Presently Miss Molly, who looked back oftenest, reported the figure of a veiled woman following. A low voice reached them: "Go on! Turn to the right. Wait in the corner of the wall for me."

They obeyed in silence. The veiled woman joined them. "Why did you come there?" she asked, still in her low, rather dull voice. "It is not any place for foreign women. It is n't safe."

"Why not?"

The woman shrugged. "It is the quarter of the ouled-nails."

"'Ouled-nails'?"—the ladies looked blank.

"You *are* green, are n't you?" murmured the woman, and laughed a little.

Suddenly they understood. Rumors of the White Slave traffic have not failed to penetrate even to Watertown, Wisconsin, and at the sewing-circles and the euchre-parties the perils of life in the city are often discussed with bated breath. But that they, the Misses Wilkins, should have themselves been called upon to brave such perils—! It was fantastic.

Miss Molly stammered, "Oh, but the door was not locked! If those poor things had only known! They might have escaped."

"Escaped?" repeated the voice behind the yashmak. "Where to? What to?"

"What were you doing there yourself? Are you a mission-worker?" demanded Miss Jane.

The blue eyes turned to her wearily. "I belong there. I'm one of them."

There seemed nothing further to say. If there was, the sisters could not have said it.

"I thought I'd speak to you," went on the shrouded voice. "It's so long since I've talked to an American woman. You're from the Middle West—somewhere near Chicago?"

"From Watertown, Wisconsin."

"Yes. I knew your voices, and the way you look. . . . Watertown! I can see it quite plainly." She closed her eyes. "Wide, dusty streets, lined with young maple-trees, and picket-fences. Big yards.

Frame houses, with porches. There'd be a drug-store where they make ice-cream soda. . . . It's a long time since I've tasted ice-cream soda. Sometimes I dream about it."

The sisters spoke together: "Have you been to Watertown?"

She nodded. "I was born there. Only it's name was n't Watertown. They're all the same—all home. . . . You're going back soon?"

"To-night."

"I saw your boat come in, this morning. I see so many ships come in, and go away again. I wish," she said in her dull, quiet voice, "that I could go home, too;" and suddenly she put her arms against the wall, and buried her face in them.

For once Miss Molly did not await her sister's lead. "My dear," she cried quickly, "you can! We'll take you home ourselves!"

"Molly!"

"Yes, we will!" Miss Molly turned on her elder, transfigured. "Jane, for years we've been subscribing to mission work. This is our chance to really do something. Afford it? Of course we can afford it. We've got to! Why, Jane"—she spoke with a certain shyness, for Deity is not often mentioned in the Wilkinses' circle—"wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

The woman had raised her head and was staring from one to the other. "Take me home?" she murmured. "You mean that you will take me with you to America?"

"Of course!"

"Yes," added Miss Wilkins slowly. "Only, you will have to come at once. The ship sails at five."

The woman drew a sharp breath. "I'm ready," she said.

As they went, Miss Wilkins glanced at her sister from time to time, incredulously, as if she saw a stranger. The little lady walked on air, busily planning out her campaign.

"Of course we can't take her aboard looking like this. You'll have to go ahead, Sister, and bring back my old rain-coat and a proper hat and a pair of shoes. Oh, and you'd better get some cold cream, too, to take all that stuff off her face."

"Yes, Molly," said Miss Wilkins meekly.

"And if it's true that all the berths are sold, we'll just have to take her in with us, sleeping turn and turn about. The one there is n't room for can stay on deck, in the steamer-chair."

"Yes, Molly."

They waited for Miss Wilkins in a little street just off the quay, where they were not conspicuous. But in Algiers nothing is conspicuous, not even the companionship of an elderly American spinster and an ouled-nail. The girl did not speak at all, but stood gazing out across the water; stared and stared, as if she were visioning far places.

Once Miss Molly asked her name.

"I have forgotten," she replied with a certain dignity; adding, "Up there they call me Myrrha." She nodded toward the Street of Stairs.

"That's almost 'Myra.' We'll call you Myra," said Miss Molly softly. "It was my mother's name."

Soon Miss Wilkins reappeared, over her arm not the old rain-coat, but her own brand-new plaid ulster; and the flowered band-box she carried contained nothing less than the Paris hat with which they had planned to stun the Sabbath eyes of Watertown, turn and turn about. Miss Molly glowed. That was so like Jane, to give, when she gave at all, of her very best!

The girl submitted passively to their ministrations, putting up her face like a child, to be cleansed of its cosmetics. It proved to be a strangely gray, lined face, and Miss Wilkins looked more than once at the black, distended pupils of her eyes.

"It's my belief," thought the lady suddenly, "that she Takes Something." (Thus delicately is a drug-habit referred to in the best circles of Watertown.)

The sandals were replaced by shoes, the veil and hood by the Paris hat, a thing of gay, iridescent plumage like a bird's wings, whose centre-front supported an enormous question-mark. The discarded garments were left behind in the band-box—"With your past life, my dear," said Miss Molly solemnly.

They ran unnoted the gamut of the pier, and reached the safety of their cabin. "There!" said Molly. "Myra, you're almost home!"

The girl gazed at them. She seemed to be waiting. "You have n't asked me any questions," she said at last. "Ought n't you to ask me some questions?"

"Just tell us anything you care to, my dear."

Myrrha gripped her hands together and began, quite simply: "I wanted to see the world. It was dull at home. I was tired of it. So I ran away to Chicago. . . . You don't see much of the world from behind a ribbon-counter. There was a man who had to go to Paris, and he wanted me to go with him. So I went."

"He—he did n't marry you?"

"Oh, no. I thought perhaps he might, but I never asked. You see, I liked him. . . . And I wanted to see the world."

"I know," whispered Miss Molly. "I know!"

"Then I got into trouble, and he did n't like that. I thought perhaps he would, but he did n't. So when I came back to the hotel one day, he was gone."

"Deserted you?"

"Oh, he left me some money," she said, oddly defensive. "But it did n't last long. The baby died——"

"Oh!" gasped Miss Molly. "To think of having a baby, and then losing it!" (It is to be feared that she grieved more over the loss of a baby than the loss of a soul.)

The girl looked at her queerly. She had been about to add, "Thank God," but she changed her mind.

"I got tired of Paris," she said. "People took me to other places. I was such a pretty girl, once. And I've seen the world. Why, I was two years on the China coast! I've seen the world; and it's just the same everywhere. Just men. . . . My God!" she said, softly and quietly, "how I hate men!"

The sisters were silent. It was not a subject upon which they felt qualified to speak.

"Then they brought me here, and I've stayed. It gets you, here. There are other places to see, of course, but I've stayed. I'm tired now, and old——"

"How old are you?"

"Almost thirty," she answered.

Miss Wilkins gulped. For the first time she felt the pathos of this girl who knew herself to be old at thirty.

Myrrha got restlessly to her feet and moved about. "What are you going to do with me there in Watertown?" she demanded. "What are you going to do with me?"

"First of all, we're going to give you a good rest and a good coddling," soothed Miss Molly. "Then—I suppose we'll find you some situation. We don't keep help ourselves, but there are plenty of ladies who do. Help's scarce, too. Can you sew or cook?"

"I used to," she murmured drearily.

"Well, I can teach you things like that, and Sister will teach you lots of other things. She's the clever one. She's going to make a good Christian woman out of you—are n't you, Jane?"

"I'll do my best," agreed the superintendent of Watertown's Presbyterian Sunday-school.

Myrrha stared out of the port-hole, gripping her hands.

The ladies produced a shirt-waist, an alpaca skirt, and other essentials, from their scanty store. "Would n't you like to put on some real clothes now? Shall we help you?" they asked.

"No, no. I'd rather—be alone." She looked about nervously. "Have you seen a necklace I had, with a small carved box hanging on it?"

"Here it is." Miss Wilkins had been examining the trifle with some curiosity. She had even extracted from the box its contents of tiny white pellets. "I knew she Took Something—I knew it!" was her thought, dismayed and triumphant.

They left her to herself. "You see, she's got some modesty left," murmured Miss Molly. "She would n't undress before us."

The fog-horn blared repeatedly, summoning in the last of the scattered sight-seers. With reluctance the vendors made their departure; he of the violets, he of the silver jewelry that comes off green upon the skin. A bell clanged. The band burst into action. They were off.

"There goes the last of it. The last of Abroad!" said Miss Wilkins, sighing.

Miss Molly replied abstractedly, "It's my belief we were led. It's my belief God called us to Algiers from half across the world. Oh, but was n't it *lucky* Cousin Charlie died!"

Her sister was gazing at the slow retreat of Africa through a borrowed glass. She gave an exclamation, rubbed the lens, and looked again.

"Molly, look! There, hurrying up that terrace to the town. Is n't it—is n't it *our Paris hat?*"

It was. The tall feather question-mark was unmistakable. There could not be another such hat out of the neighborhood of the Galeries Lafayette. Also, the ulster it surmounted was of new green plaid.

The sisters hastened to their cabin. It was empty. Nothing remained of their late protégée except a trace of faint, strange perfume which caused Miss Jane hastily to fling open the port-hole. Then they saw a note pinned to a pillow:

Good-by. I can't stand it. You're too good. I don't belong there any more. But thank you. Thank you.

They sat down, heavily.

"The lure of the Orient!" whispered Miss Molly. "The lure of the Orient!"

"I don't know," said Miss Jane. "I guess it was those pellets. Perhaps I ought n't to have taken them. . . . I meant to let her have them one at a time, when she really needed them. I only wanted to break the habit. It never would have done to have a girl around who Took Something."

She seemed to be apologizing to somebody.

Unheeded, the tears streamed down Miss Molly's cheeks. Suddenly she turned and hid her face upon her sister's manly breast.

"I want to go home," she sobbed. "I'm tired of Europe and the world. I want to go straight back home to Watertown, where such things don't happen!" she wailed in her innocence. "Where there never was and never could be such a place as that Street of Stairs!"

Miss Wilkins, gulping, nodded.



THE TRAP

By GEORGE ALLAN ENGLAND

I

WHY Murch hated Benson is not here a matter of any vital moment. The really important factor of the case is that his hate was of very long standing, and that it was the kind which prompts revenge and torture, rather than the mere stupid brutalities of murder. Also, Murch was by brain and temperament a long-waiting, competent, ingenious man.

His hatred had existed long before the two men had been thrown together by fate on the Directors' Board of Amalgamated Zinc. The mere detail that, at the time of the looting, in 1908, Benson's testimony—and that alone—had given Murch a five-spot in Atlanta, had not appreciably intensified the passion. Beyond a certain point, no flame can sear.

Benson had got ten years' hard labor, at the same time. His wife's epic campaign for a pardon, ending in failure, had stirred the nation. Even these incidents had been slight satisfaction to Murch, for he had had no hand in the imposition of the sentence, neither could he, from his cell, help block any possible leanings of Presidential clemency. These things he sincerely regretted. He also looked forward with displeasure—though of a patient kind—to the long years which must elapse after his own release, before Benson should reëmerge into the world and once more come within striking distance.

Such are the bald, necessary preliminaries of this story. Let them be borne in mind, as you read on.

Now, it happened, at ten o'clock on the morning of March 18, 1912, that Murch was a free man once more. His "copper," or good-conduct allowance—for he had been an exemplary prisoner—had cut off eleven months and five days from his sentence. His debt to justice fully paid, he emerged into the mellow spring sunshine of Georgia, shaven head covered with a top-hat, immaculately clad, and in passable health. The prison pallor was all that told of the past, as he stood there a moment on the broad steps of the Federal Penitentiary, with Congdon, his best friend, who had come down to meet him. At the curb, his 60 H.P. car was throbbing—for Murch was still a very rich man. Congdon and he slowly descended the steps, unmindful of the curious little crowd and the shutter-snapping of the press men. They got into the car and drove

off, not even lowering the curtains. Murch held his head higher than ever. His pride was that of Lucifer.

As the car swung into Peachtree Street, he gave one glance back to the "stir" which had robbed him of more than four years of life. One glance, and smiled. For he had looked only at the West Wing, on the top corridor of which, in "Conny Row"—so-called because of the prevalence of tuberculosis there—he knew Benson still must wait at least another four years and two months.

Then the 60 H.P. growled away out of sight, toward the north; and Murch vanishes from the purlieus of Atlanta.

II

ABOUT two months from that day, Mrs. Benson received an anonymous letter which produced a series of varying and acute emotions in her desolated soul. This letter carried merely the noncommittal postmark of "Madison Square Station," and was typewritten on a machine like any one of ten thousand. Neither paper nor envelope bore any marks whereby the sender could be identified.

It read:

NEW YORK CITY, MAY 11, 1912.

MRS. MAXWELL W. BENSON,

"The Van Buren," New York.

DEAR MADAM:

Though a stranger to you, I am writing in regard to effecting your husband's escape from the Penitentiary at Atlanta. Mr. Benson is confined in the top tier of the West Wing, probably the most dangerous place to the health, of any in the prison. If he has not already contracted tuberculosis there, every chance exists that he will before his sentence expires, in 1916. I am reckoning the shortest possible time, with all allowances for the best of conduct.

There is one way, and only one, whereby he can escape. If you succeed in helping him to this, you will undoubtedly save his life. If not, my belief is that your husband will die in the Penitentiary. The guard is changed in the West Wing at midnight. A man named Kerrigan is on duty in your husband's corridor from 12, midnight, till 6 A.M. This man is elderly and a trifle deaf. Long security has loosened his watchfulness. He has also been known to nap while on duty.

If your husband were supplied with the proper steel saws and a glass-cutter, he could, with plenty of time and patience, remove the bars from his cell window and take out the glass. Four of the cells on the top tier have windows overlooking the prison yard. These are occupied by men to whom a little special consideration is shown. Your husband, as you know, has one of these cells, No. 26, next to the end of the tier.

In case he could remove the bars and the glass, he could easily gain access to the roof of the basket-shop, which stands in the yard, closely abutting the main wing. Under ordinary circumstances, this would be of no value to him, because the shop is three stories high, and a leap from the roof would only land his corpse in the yard itself. But

the plan I am outlining to you includes some circumstances which are not usual.

With your means, it would be a matter of comparative simplicity for you to have built, via an agent who should understand nothing of the matter, a special type of dirigible balloon, or air-ship, fitted with a plunging electric beam to light up objects directly below, also with a windlass, a long rope, and a cage or basket capable of being quickly pulled up. The case now becomes clear—

Mrs. Benson, pale as any ghost, stopped reading, with a gasp, and clutched at her heart—which was weak. For a moment she thought she was fainting; but she was n't. She had no time now for the luxury of a faint. Instead, with eyes that fairly leaped through the sentences, and hands shaking as with the ague, she read:

The case now becomes clear. Have your husband escape by night to the roof of the basket-shop, and then have the dirigible pick him up. It would leave absolutely no trace whatsoever, in case the ballast discharged to counterpoise your husband's weight were water, instead of sand. All that the authorities would find would be a wet roof, and no Convict No. 4,327. Probably even the water would dry up before the escape were discovered. Your husband would simply vanish, in an unparalleled mystery.

Have the dirigible make a quick flight to New Orleans. Mr. Benson could thoroughly disguise himself as an aviator, en route, and could burn his prison clothes, dropping the ashes on the way, or weight them and let them fall into some lake or river. At New Orleans he could catch a steamer for Bordeaux or South America or any one of a number of points, where you could rejoin him.

The matter of communicating these details to him is easy. Take any newspaper, and with a fine needle prick letters in succession, at varying distances, spelling out all you wish to convey. These papers will easily pass the wardens. Have him answer in the same manner, by sending you the prison paper, *The Star of Hope*. I myself will see that he is made to understand this method of communication, and I charge myself with getting the steel saws and the cutter into his hands before September. Just how, I need not explain. It will be done, that is enough to know.

You now have the whole matter in your own hands, my dear madam. You understand every essential detail. Let your affection and devotion to your husband serve as the actuating force. I need say no more.

With sincere regards and sympathy, believe me,
Faithfully yours,

A FRIEND.

P. S.—It is unnecessary for me to point out to you the necessity for the very greatest deliberation, skill, and caution in every move. If, after the plan is set in motion, any mischance should make it miscarry, the mental anguish caused to your husband would be intense beyond the power of words to express. Furthermore, in case of apprehension in an attempt at escape, he would not only lose all his good-time allowance, but would undoubtedly get another five years. In the present state of his health, this would inevitably prove fatal.

It is not my purpose to delay this tale by describing the intense emotions of Florence Benson, or all the long and complex actions and counter-actions which her quick brain and undying love—the wondrous, puissant wife-love—set in motion during the next few months.

Acting through agents who in turn acted through other agents, not one of whom knew more than a minute part of the whole, the woman spun her web, and with a master-hand perfected all details. Let these pass. Our story has other and more important matters to deal with.

Among these I mention only one—that on May 12, 1912, Murch locked his desk in the little office at 32 Broad Street, drew one hundred thousand dollars in bills from his account at the City National, and, announcing a two-years' stay in Europe, bought a first-class ticket for Havre.

He sailed on *La Savoie*. Thereafter, he vanished from the eyes of a world too busy to concern itself with one man more or less.

III

IN the intense black of 2 A.M., on the 6th of September, 1912, a still blacker shadow cautiously glided in from the north-west, over the city of Atlanta, at an elevation of about five hundred feet. Neither moon nor stars betrayed it, for the sky was shrouded in low-hanging clouds that let a fine, incessant drizzle sift to earth. From the moving, oval shadow hovering above the town, no noise descended. Specially built motors and mufflers, operating as quietly as clockwork, sent hardly a hum into the surrounding darkness. Slowly the dirigible crawled, as, guided by the lines of street-lights lying far below like sparks strung on invisible wire, it made its way toward the huge, bastioned bulk of the Pen.

In the *nacelle*, leather-clad, with cap that covered ears and neck, and goggles shielding eyes, a single figure peered alertly down. His deft hand on wheel and motor-control, he navigated like a pilot nosing in among reefs and shoals. For some minutes he jockeyed, then, with a sigh of relief, perceived directly under him the huge, star-shaped mass of the Federal Prison.

All at once—for now that the crucial moment was at hand, this risk had become absolutely inevitable—a long white ray, perfectly focussed, flashed downward. It fell directly on the roof of the West Wing, shifted, and in a moment lay steady on the basket-shop. Then, with a quick and searching vibration, it swept that roof, as though some gigantic painter, with a brush of light, were quickly covering the slates.

Almost at once the aviator perceived the man he had been sent for. Behind the southern chimney-stack crouched a black huddle. As the light touched this huddle, it arose, and moved, and became a human figure, clad in stripes; and two arms became visible, upraised imploringly. The aviator smiled as he released a lever.

With no more sound than the purring of a cat, a weighted basket of wicker shot downward, at the end of a long cord, woven of the finest hemp, strong enough to support a ton, yet flexible as a whip-lash. The basket fell straight and true. Keenly peering, the aviator checked its drop at the precise moment when it threatened to crash against the slates. He saw the figure leap for it and scramble in. Came a lurch and a recover as the air-ship momentarily staggered under the new load. Then from the ballast tanks, fore and aft, streamed the counterbalancing water, which mingled with the rain, and for a moment glistened like falling diamonds in the pure white ray of brilliance.

"Click!"

The light faded and died.

"Click!"

Another lever threw in the hoisting-drum. With a *Rrrrrrr* the pawl-and-ratchet told of that swift upward surge. Like a monstrous pendulum, the basket with its human freight swung wide, cleared the higher roof of the West Wing, and yawed into empty space.

Already the powerful propellers were whirring. The air-ship reeled, staggered, and found herself.

Before the drenched and chattering figure in the basket had been hauled by the aviator's powerful grip through the trap-door that yawned, waiting, in the bottom of the *nacelle*, with a slant of planes and a fast-rising crescendo of motors, the dirigible had leaped aloft, swerved to the south-east, and like a homing pigeon was off, away, on her long, space-splitting, speed-annihilating race toward the far haven of New Orleans!

IV

AT a little before seven o'clock, that same morning, the dirigible sank to rest in a deserted clearing, far from any human habitation, between Convent and Bonnet Carré, Louisiana. To southward, some miles beyond the *Bâton Rouge* turnpike, lay the broad, chocolate-hued flood of the *Mississippi*. To northward, dense growths of live oak and long-leaf pine, festooned with Spanish moss that hung like vergies on a full-dressed man-o'-war. Almost due east, and forty miles away, the city stretched beneath its jetties. At the bottom of *Lake Ponchartrain*, in fifteen fathoms, lay a tightly-lashed bundle of striped clothes, wrapped round ten pounds of pig-iron.

Gently the great bird sank, as the aviator released her hydrogen. He checked the descent at a height of ten feet and threw out the rope-ladder, anchored, and with solicitude helped an enfeebled, coughing passenger climb stiffly to earth, among the ferns and fire-weed.

This passenger wore motor-clothes of excellent cut, heavy gloves, and goggles. A masterpiece of a wig concealed his close-clipped poll. The parchment hue of his face alone betrayed him; but this might easily

pass as a concomitant of the little hacking cough that now and then would not be fought back.

The passenger sat down under a gum-tree at the edge of the clearing, and waited. He spoke no word; his energies, indeed, seemed hardly competent for speech. In his eyes burned a fever that brightened their blue unnaturally; his nervous hands, unable to be still, fingered at the buttons of his jacket. Now and then he coughed.

Eagerly he watched the aviator collapse the gas-bag and cover the motor with oiled canvas, as though to leave it for a while. Though he said nothing, you could see the fire of haste burning his soul out. To him it seemed that every moment was an hour; for in imagination he was listening to a sound of dread—the long, roaring blasts of the Pen steam-siren that, wailing over Atlanta, now four hundred miles away, was at that very moment telling the tale: "*Convict escaped!*"

The aviator, his task finally at an end, strode off through the thin blue mist rising from the soil, and disappeared down a rough-cut wood-road at the other side of the clearing. Presently the prut-prut-put-put-put of a motor-car began spattering echoes; and soon the car itself, crouching and rocking over the villainous road, drew into sight.

The car stopped, near Benson.

"If you'll get in now, sir," said the aviator-chauffeur, touching his cap, "we'll start at once. By nine o'clock I can get you to New Orleans. After that, whatever other service you may require, I shall be glad to undertake."

He spoke with a very slight foreign accent. Benson glanced up sharply at his ruddy face and close-clipped brown mustache. The blue-goggled eyes met his unflinchingly. The ex-convict's gaze fell. The old-time look had lasted but a second. Long discipline had already broken the man's spirit, so that even a menial's request seemed a command of authority.

Wearily he arose, without life or spring, and climbed into the tonneau, the door of which the chauffeur held open for him.

The door slammed shut. Benson, terrified even in that close concealment—which at the same time seemed to him a kind of imprisonment, and filled him with repulsion—sank back coughing against the cushions.

The car grumbled forward again, down the road, passed through the strip of woods to the turnpike, swung sharply to the left, and now, with a raucous grind of clutches, leaped into high-gear.

The last lap of the strange, adventurous escape had begun. Already Benson's uncertain thoughts were of the sea, of ships, of fair, free lands beyond three thousand miles of brine—of life, and liberty, and love once more!

V

NINE deep-toned strokes had just doled solemnly from the spire of St. Louis Cathedral, when the car swerved into Jackson Square, where stands that venerable pile, and drew up at the door of the Hotel Michaelis.

The chauffeur helped his charge alight, and guided him into the hotel, which—being small and very private—had been chosen by Florence Benson as the final step in the stair of her plans, the brief resting-place whence her well-loved husband should pass on to final safety.

In a few minutes the escaped convict was installed in the back room on the fourth floor, which had already for more than a fortnight been engaged against the coming of "Mr. Franklin Holmes," an out-of-health investor on his way to Chile.

When he and the chauffeur were alone once more, Benson threw himself, fully dressed, upon the bed. His exhaustion was pitiable. Body, nerves, mind, all seemed to have collapsed, now that at length the stern necessity of keeping up was temporarily passed. The chauffeur, covertly eying him, smiled an evil smile.

"Bath, sir?" queried he. "Lunch? Little something to drink? Anything you'd like, sir?"

"No, no," coughed Benson. "I—I'm too tired even to want a nip of brandy. Sleep! I must have sleep! Here!" and he drew out the pocket-book from his new coat pocket. "Here, take this—go to Cook's—get me a first-class ticket to Bordeaux, on the *Prince Metternich*, tomorrow noon. Come back in two hours, not before. I must sleep! Now go—please."

The command trailed off weakly in entreaty. Again the chauffeur smiled.

"Quite sure——?" he began, but Benson waved a petulant hand, for silence. The other took the pocket-book, and withdrew. Behind him, the spring-lock clicked. Benson, with a sigh of infinite relief, hid his face in the pillows, and wept—the bitter, scanty tears of nervous exhaustion, like those already of old age. And always, at intervals, the dry cough racked his hollow chest.

Outside, in the dim corridor of the hotel, the chauffeur did a singular thing. Instead of ringing for the elevator and going for the tickets, he drew from his pocket a skeleton key. With this, after two or three trials, he let himself into the room next to Benson's. He seemed to know that the room would be empty.

Making sure that the door was bolted, he moved a chair up to the other door which communicated with Benson's room, when the two chambers were thrown together *en suite*. Upon this chair he stood. The shades were down, in his room, and the place was dark. Without danger of being seen, he could peek through a tiny hole already scraped in the

paint on the transom glass. To this hole he applied his eye; and as he again beheld the emaciated form of the ex-convict, once more he smiled.

The man had drawn from his pocket a photograph, and with feverish intensity was kissing it. Very wan and white his face was, almost bloodless the lips. The wig, fallen awry, disclosed the hideous prison tonsure. In the reddened eyes, the glint of tears was visible. The chauffeur nodded, and his smile grew wider. He rubbed his hands together, delightedly. For some time he watched, until at length Benson, calmed by utter lassitude, fell into an uneasy sleep.

Then, and not till then, did the watcher climb down, unbolt the door, and, locking it again after him, ring for the elevator.

In the office he said to the clerk: "Mr. Holmes is sleeping and does n't want to be disturbed. We came in all the way from Baton Rouge, this morning. Rotten roads you have down here, don't you? You'll see that no one bothers him till I get back?"

The clerk nodded. Out into the bright sunshine of Jackson Square the chauffeur strode.

"Put the car into the garage," he commanded the door man. "We shan't want it till to-morrow."

Slowly he crossed the street and entered the park. With an intense satisfaction he strolled along the broad, curving, white-shell walls between the neatly-cut hedges. Here he stopped to look at a bed of gaudy blooms, there to watch a fountain. The mild air of that southern September morning, the sunlight, the come-and-go of the lazy pedestrians—whites, blacks, French, and Creoles—and the babble of children with their negro mammies in the park, all added to his enjoyment. Even the sparrows taking dust-baths in the pathways or splashing their feathers on the edge of the basin, pleased him. For all, everything spoke to him of liberty—and at that thought, once again his lips curled beneath the cropped mustache and a strange light flicked into his eyes.

With his motoring goggles pushed up onto his forehead, hands idling in his leather pockets, he strolled. He seemed to be thinking, considering, planning with deliberate care; and his thoughts seemed happy ones. Now and again he smiled or nodded to himself. It was plain to see something was very much to his liking.

At length he sat down on a bench facing the Cathedral. He commanded a view both of the hotel and of the Cabilda. As he contemplated the two-story adobe and shell-lime façade of this ancient court-house, his eyes gleamed.

"Five minutes," muttered he, "and officers from the municipal court, there, could get the nippers on him. He's mine, all right enough. The only question is—has he had run enough for his money yet? Would n't it gash him deeper to be taken in just as the steamer's sailing? I don't want to spoil any of the effect by slapping down my joker too soon!"

He pondered again, a few moments, then lit a cigarette, leaned back on the bench, and basked in the morning sun.

"Gad!" muttered he, "it's certainly great to be free! All the hell any man needs is 'stir'! If I'd got the same as *he* did, more than likely my spirit would have been broken, too. Lucky he could n't bawl out on me hard enough to give me a tenner. Oh, he'd have done it, all right enough, if he'd had the chance! Even as it was, I owe him four years and more. I certainly intend to pay my debt. Let's see, now—just what's to be done? Everything O. K., so far. It's worked like a charm. Mrs. B. has n't ever suspected a thing. I got the message and the tools to him, all right, and gave him the emotions of his life, sawing those bars.

"It was a hard job to hit the right disguise and follow all Mrs. B.'s operations, and the hardest part of all was to land the position as aviator. Gad! It cost me ten weeks of lathering work, in overalls and out, even to get my airman's license, so I could get Dubois to take me up and put the finishing touches on me, but I managed even that. I reckon the whole thing has set me back forty or fifty thou. McShane's bill for private detective work was twenty-six—just that, alone—and that's only one item. Oh, it's been an expensive blow-out, all right enough, but it's going to be worth it, Murch, old boy—it's going to be well worth it all!"

A while he smoked, absorbed in thought. When the cigarette was a mere shred, he tossed it away.

"Let's look at his funds," said Murch.

And from the inside pocket of his leather coat he drew the pocket-book of his long-hated enemy, now sleeping the sleep of utter exhaustion in the little back room not a block away.

VI

WITH interest Murch counted the cash given over to him by Benson. It totalled some eight thousand dollars, in bills of large denominations.

"H'm!" grunted he, replacing the money in the book, "looks as though the wad that Mrs. B. put into the clothes in the air-ship, for him, was pretty slim. My guess is that the Benson fortunes are about all in. This is probably the last squeeze. Suppose I should just annex it, and disappear? Where would *he* be, then? But no—I'm not a sneak-thief, thank God! There's a bigger game going on than anything that ever involved only money!"

Once more he examined the pocket-book, to make sure he had not overlooked anything. There might possibly be something there, still further to whet his appetite for enjoyment.

"Ah!" he exclaimed. The bulge of an inner compartment, on the other side of the wallet, betrayed the presence of a paper.

Quickly he drew it out, and opened it.

The paper was a page of the New York *Herald*. At a glance, Murch's quick eye saw that here and there almost microscopic punctures had been made.

"A message from his wife, so help me! Probably the last one he got, before the escape. He must have had it with him in the dirigible, and when he changed his clothes, he saved it. What the devil, now?"

Murch set to work to read the message. Painstakingly, letter by letter, he spelled it out. At first, only a frown creased his brow, but as he read still further, his expression changed, despite him. Midway of it, he started sharply. And by the time it was at an end, the look in his eyes was one you should have seen.

Impatiently he shook himself, as he folded the paper and shoved it back into the pocket-book.

He smoked another cigarette. The time was now at hand for him to get up and walk across the Square to the Cabilda, but still he did not go. Persistently the face of Benson seemed to rise before him. Once he remembered that face, ruddy, hard, overbearing, with a sneer upon the lips and lurking fire in the eyes. Once he remembered the man's body, robust and beefy, full-fed, vigorous.

Where was that man, now? In the wasted frame lying on the bed in the little back room, racked by coughing; in the yellowed, shrunken face, the pale and timorous eyes, the sagging droop of the mouth—what was there left of Benson?

"So she thinks there's a chance even yet, eh, does she?" mused the enemy. "She believes the last tag-end of money, got by selling out the house and everything, even to the wedding ring, will turn the trick, in the mountains of San Marino, Italy, where extradition laws don't go, what? Thinks he can still pull out of it, and make good, square everything, and all the rest of it? And then—h'm!—the other part of the message! . . . Now, *that*——"

Murch had grown perceptibly pale. Nervously his hands clasped and unclasped. With a dry tongue he licked his lips.

He glanced at the Cabilda, then across the Square at Gentian Street. "That's the way to Cook's, to the ticket-office," he was thinking.

"Curse me for an infernal fool!" he gritted angrily.

Ending No. 1

Once more he drew out the pocket-book. From it he took the paper. A moment, and it lay in a hundred pieces on the white shell path.

"Almost opened the trap, didn't you?" he sneered. "Almost—but not quite!"

Ending No. 2

Then, moving almost with the unwillingness of an hypnotic subject, he arose.

"The message—it—it's opened the trap!" he whispered. "By God, I—I lose, after all! Idiot that I was, to have read the infernal thing!"

Ending No. 3

Suddenly he laughed, the harsh and mirthless laughter of a man in pain.

"Here!" growled he. "Let this open or shut the trap for me. Let *this* decide. I can't!"

From his pocket he drew a quarter.

Ending No. 1.

He rose, ground the bits of paper beneath his heel, and then, without another look, unhesitatingly strode toward the grim old Cabilda, across the sunlit Square.

Ending No. 2.

Without another look behind, he turned sharply and, in haste, as though he feared to change his mind again, swung into his stride toward Gentian Street—and Cook's!

Ending No. 3.

"Heads, the Cabilda. Tails, Cook's!"

Cursing, he flipped the coin in the sunlit air. A second it flickered aloft, then fell with a sharp clink on the pathway at his feet.

With staring eyes and a hand that shook, in spite of all that he could do, Murch clutched the coin up.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Mr. George Allen England submitted the three foregoing endings to the story, saying that we could take our choice or else print them all—as we have. We are thus "putting it up to" our readers; and we shall be glad to have any of them who will, write to us, saying which ending they prefer, and why.

INTERNATIONAL

BY THOMAS L. MASSON

"MY manners are perfect, but my morals are—well, rather deficient," said the Frenchman.

"We can match 'em," said the American.

"My stupidity is a fixed racial quality," said the German.

"We can match it," said the American.

"My craving for narcotics is part of my existence," said the Turk.

"We can match it," said the American.

"My cant is one of the seven wonders of the world," said the Englishman.

"We can match it," said the American.

"My cruelty is enduring as stone," said the Russian.

"We can match it," said the American.

"My bigotry is immortal," said the Spaniard.

"We can match it," said the American.

"We might easily," said the other unimportant nations, "enumerate the particular qualities for which we are noted, but—what is the use?"

"We can match even that," said the American. "We might easily match each one of these qualities, as you define them. But there is no use because we are now a part of all that you have been."

THE WAR AND THE AMERICAN INVESTOR

BY EDWARD SHERWOOD MEAD, PH.D.

AUTHOR OF "THE CAREFUL INVESTOR"

IN spite of editorials and cartoons to the contrary, national wars, such as the conflict in which Europe is now engaged, are not made by the rich in order to fill their own pockets at the expense of the poor. It is a safe conclusion that nine out of ten of the people who have property of any kind are opposed to war, which is carried on by the destruction of property. It is the majority which goes to war and wages war, and the majority is without means, except its earnings. Just as the property classes are forced to sustain the burden of great political changes brought about by the action of the propertyless masses, so in times like these the investors of the world are forced to sit by and see their holdings dwindle in value. What, now, is the position of the American investor in this great emergency? For the present, values have gone down. Nominally, prices have been reduced. The American stock-holder and bondholder, because he cannot sell what he has at the prices formerly prevailing, feels himself poorer. Will this condition continue, and what will be the eventual effect of the European war upon the value of securities held by American investors?

To begin with, we are in an exceptionally fortunate position, in that we hold no European securities. Our investments are almost wholly confined to the American continent. In only a few cases, such as the Westinghouse Company, for example, have American corporations invested in foreign lands. Broadly speaking, however, we have no European investments. Consider, now, the immense advantage over the European investor which the American stock- and bond-holders possess in this crisis. European railroads have been taken over by the government. In so far as they are privately owned, their earnings have almost entirely disappeared. European industrial plants have been forced either entirely to suspend or seriously curtail their operations, due to the fact that most of their men employees have been called to the colors. European shipping has almost disappeared from the sea. Every great nation in Europe is faced, moreover, with enormous increases of taxation, which will cut into the revenues of the investor more seriously than into the income of any other class; and by enormous sales of government bonds, during and

after the conflict, these cannot fail seriously to reduce, for many years, the market value of other classes of securities. These considerations are entirely aside from the enormous losses in life and property which every nation involved in the struggle must bear. In the United States we are almost wholly free from the worst effects of the European conflict. Our foreign trade, it is true, may be for a time seriously disturbed. What we lose on the Continent, however, it is reasonably sure we shall make up in South America. Furthermore, our exports to Europe consist mainly of food-stuffs and indispensable raw materials, such as cotton. It is not believed that the movement of these products, unless European industry is to be entirely suspended, can long be interfered with. Some way will almost certainly have been found, before the publication of this article, for the release of the surplus products of the United States to their necessitous European consumers. It is also to be expected that materially higher prices for all food-stuffs will be secured as the result of the war. Indeed, that effect is already evident.

So far as import trade is concerned, the advantage is all with the United States. Europe sends us few raw materials. The manufactured products which we formerly purchased, outside of a few limited classes of luxuries, we can make for ourselves. In this respect the war will have the effect of a sudden advance in the tariff. The American manufacturer can raise his price and increase his output to supply the demand in domestic consumption, due to the closing of the continental supplies. There are a few exceptions to this general rule. The oil industry will suffer severely, because oil is contraband of war, and the European nations are the largest consumers of our oil exports. Even this situation, however, is not without its brighter side, since Russian competition with American oil must for a time disappear. Our imports of raw materials come almost entirely from tropical and semi-tropical countries. This traffic will be in no way disturbed by the European war. During the progress of the conflict, therefore, it is not unreasonable to expect that American industry will be quite as prosperous as during the past year. The large crops will be sold at much higher prices, which will give a tremendous stimulus to every form of production. The foreign trade, while changed in location and direction, will not seriously shrink in volume. All dangers of monetary disturbances, owing to the wise precautions which we have so providently taken, by the conferences of the government with financial leaders, have been averted. The American investor can, therefore, rid his mind of serious apprehension for the immediate future.

What, now, will be the immediate effect of the conflict? In this field forecast is more difficult. It must be admitted that, considered in its world aspect, the European war is an unmixed evil. It will involve the destruction of an enormous amount of property, and the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives, and the total or partial disabling of a much

larger number of producers. It is going altogether too far to expect, at least at this juncture, that the outcome of the war will settle anything, and therefore the already almost unsupportable burdens of militarism, aggravated by the interest on war loans, must be continued and probably increased. The close of the conflict will find Europe weakened in every way as producers, as lenders, and as consumers. The United States cannot hope, for years to come, to draw upon the hitherto abundant reservoirs of European capital to develop our railroads and industries. Beyond this, we shall have to repurchase most of our American securities which are now held abroad. This repurchase will, for a long time, absorb a large part of our surplus available for investment. Instead of buying the securities of new enterprises or new bond and stock issues, put out for improvements by established corporations, the American investor will buy at broken prices the stock of standard American railways and industrials. Choosing the path of safety, he will put his money into approved securities, which the necessities of foreign investors will offer to him at moderate prices. In view of this situation, it is unreasonable to expect that the United States can be immune from the effects of the great war. Construction, operation, the building of extensions of railroads and development of mines, and the like, demand great sums of money. This money has been hitherto provided by American and European investors. After the close of the war, the European investor will be buying government bonds and selling American securities. The American investor will be repurchasing the securities sold in the past, and it is reasonably certain that the capital available for new enterprises in the United States will be seriously crippled. On the other hand, the vast destruction of life and property and the almost complete cessation of industrial activity on the continent, to recover from which a long time will be necessary, offers an unusual opportunity to American manufacturers and merchants to increase their foreign trade, especially in South America. There is no doubt that our American business men are fully awake to the exceptional opportunities now presented, and that they will profit by the misfortunes of Europe to build up a large export trade with the countries to the south of us. The prices of our raw materials will remain high for a long time to come, and our position in international trade will be correspondingly strengthened. The subject is too large for adequate consideration in the limits of a short article. Enough, however, is known of the effects of the war upon the United States to warrant the conclusion that the American investor will not be seriously injured by the conflict, and that the ultimate result of the struggle, as it improves the international trading position of the United States, will be certain to make for his advantage.

THAT MULE PINDERS

By ELIZABETH BURGESS HUGHES

WHEN old Joshua Crabbe died, young Joshua stepped into his shoes with an alacrity indicating that he might have been waiting in his stocking feet outside the door. Uncle Josh, as he was familiarly known, was the sort of man who fittingly exemplifies the cynical old adage that a man who has no enemies never amounts to much.

Everybody liked him, everybody was his friend. He was imposed on scandalously; from the minister down, people contrived to feed his sense of hospitality, with the result that the old house on the hill was a sort of Liberty Hall, ever open-doored and bounteous of larder.

This hospitable spirit had always annoyed young Joshua. He regarded the offerings on the altar of altruism in the light of personal deprivation. If Uncle Josh continued to go on like this, soon there would n't be enough left to warrant his making a will!

But at last the expected—and by the village heartily deplored—demise occurred, and after the careful reading of the will by an old legal friend of the defunct Josh (a kindly gentleman with chin-whiskers and a glass eye) young Mr. Crabbe was installed monarch of what was left out of the hospitably inclined one's estate.

This was not inconsiderable, for a village; but there was a fly in the ointment. A clause in the will had caused the glass-eyed attorney to roll his unstationary optic in amazement:

I hereby bequeath to my beloved mule Pinders one thousand dollars yearly for her up-keep, my nephew, Joshua, to be executor of the same. I stipulate that Pinders be carefully and considerably cared for, and that she remain in the possession of said nephew until her natural death, or, in case of demise of said nephew, to be passed with said one thousand dollars yearly to some trustworthy person. This condition, or conditions, not being fulfilled, the remainder of my fortune is to go to the Home for Disabled Veterans.

If Uncle Josh had ever possessed a sense of humor and could have returned to the scene in his astral shape, he must have held his astral sides at the expression of old Mr. Dobson's countenance. He began to reread:

"I hereby bequeath to my beloved mule——" He adjusted his glasses more firmly over his one good eye and peered down unbelievably. "I said *mule*, did n't I? My eyesight—— It is mule!"

He straightened triumphantly and pointed a dramatic forefinger at the astonishing clause, glaring at Mr. Joshua Crabbe the younger as if he dared him to dispute it.

"Mule?" echoed that individual skeptically. "Maybe you've got it wrong, after all. Surely——"

"See for yourself," advised Mr. Dobson concisely, and passed over the typewritten sheets containing the amazing instructions.

"Well, I'll be—— Say, there is an old short-winded, spavined, one-eyed—ahem! beg pardon—I mean, an animal that I reckon would be adjudged a mule, in a close run, out there in the stables. Uncle always called her Pinders. She's old as Adam, and if you'd ask me I'd say take her out and shoot her——"

"My dear young friend, no—no, indeed," protested Mr. Dobson firmly. He took off his glasses and wiped them distractedly. "One cannot disregard the wishes of the dead. Perhaps Pin—er—ah—the animal may be considerate enough to die soon. You say that she is old?"

"Old?" returned Mr. Crabbe scornfully. "No, she ain't *old*! She was born in the year thirty-six, I bet ye. When I was a little boy toddling around, I remember hearin' 'em say Pinders could n't last much longer, on account of her age, which, it appeared, was something wonderful for a horse—er—mule, I mean. That's been over twenty-five years ago, and——"

"My *dear* young friend," interrupted the scandalized Mr. Dobson, "are you not mistaken? I assure you I have never heard of any animal reaching—ah—so advanced an age. Really, it is quite remarkable. With your permission, I should like, when we have transacted our legal business, to have a look at the—ah—mule. It seems to me that I recall the animal."

"With pleasure," said Mr. Crabbe politely; and when the legal matter had been satisfactorily adjusted, barring the matter of the mule, they marched out to look at Pinders.

Pinders, it appeared, was in a class by herself. Uncle Joshua, who was a theosophist, had probably believed her inhabited by a friend or an ancestor. The latter seemed extremely probable—one of the ante-flood relations, let us say. Unlike many third-generation folk of this century, Pinders presented no beguiling and almost get-away-with-it appearance of youth. She was frankly ancient, and, moreover, seemed highly contented with her state of dilapidation.

"I—recall the beast," observed Mr. Dobson dejectedly. "But I did n't know your dear uncle was so fond of her as to——"

"There's one good thing about it," interjected Mr. Crabbe cheerfully,

"she can't last long. She's living on borrowed time now. Well, I'll try to do my duty by her as long as she's with us;" and young Joshua sighed forlornly.

"Well said, my boy, well said. I am sure you will carry out your dear uncle's wishes. And as you say, Pinders is so old that she cannot be long for this world."

"There's another thing," hesitated the young man, as they gazed forlornly upon what must once have been a frisky colt: "a fellow hates to be made fun of, don't you know, and if people found out about that clause in the will I'd never have another peaceful minute. It'd be sport for the millions—why, I'd *never* hear the last of it! If Tom White heard of it——"

It was Mr. Dobson's turn to sigh. His previous acquaintance with Tom White rather prejudiced him in Mr. Crabbe's favor. Really, he could almost hear Mr. White yelping across the whole of Main Street: "Hi, Josh! How's Aunt Pinders this morning?" and similar expressions of levity—especially if Mr. Crabbe happened to be walking home from the post-office with Arline Masters, a young lady visitor with whom, Rumor had it, Uncle Josh's heir was desperately smitten.

"Nobody knows about this mule business but you and the housekeeper," pursued Mr. Crabbe gloomily. "That dear old soul will do anything I ask her to, and you've got to promise me not to tell a living being about it. Why, I'd die of humiliation if everybody knew my hold upon Uncle's property rests with that thing there"—the "thing" being the ancient Pinders, who returned the epithet with a mild, noncommittal glance.

"My dear boy," said old Mr. Dobson, after a moment's profound meditation, "you may rely upon my discretion."

It appeared afterward that he might. And not only could Mr. Dobson be trusted to preserve silence on the shameful subject, but also to give sundry bits of advice as to the care of mules who were not amenable to usual stock-rules. These suggestions he rendered freely, if somewhat speculatively, and Joshua accepted them gratefully in preference to professional services, even at the risk of lessened efficiency in his dealings with Pinders, because the matter was thus kept *sub rosâ*, so to speak.

For Pinders, alas, in spite of her advanced age and her promise of longer life, appeared to be a chronic invalid. No wonder Uncle Josh had thought a thousand dollars a year necessary for her comfort. She had a fondness for attacks that began about midnight and lasted well into dawn. These unfortunate affairs started out with the mild symptom on Pinders's part of trying to kick out the end of the stable. Naturally, one could not long remain ignorant of these efforts at dissolution. It might have seemed a simple thing to let her die in one of them; but Joshua Crabbe was not a bad-hearted young man, and, moreover, he had no desire to be

reminded by the ghost of his uncle that the wishes of the dead had been neglected.

To be sure, had he wished to follow so cold-blooded a course, he would have been deterred by Mrs. Panhandle, the housekeeper, who was determined that that portion of the will regarding the mule should be scrupulously observed. Therefore, both Mrs. Panhandle and Mr. Crabbe spent much of their time trotting to and from the stables. Mrs. Panhandle would observe each time: "There, there, the poor craychure's done for this time, certain. See the whites of her eyes rollin', and feel how stiff she do be gettin', me b'y. Poor Pinders! The relief it'll be to her to get out of her sufferin's!"

Pinders's were not the only sufferings demanding relief; but after a round half-dozen attacks of this sort, which subsequently set at naught Mrs. Panhandle's sympathetic and funereal prophecies by an immediate and thorough return to health by Pinders, the old lady failed to call Crabbe's attention to the final death-agonies, and would merely sniff and remark:

"You need n't think she's in danger this time, Mr. Josh. No mortal mule could 'a' pulled through last time if they was such a thing possible as her dyin'. This time ain't a circumstance to last"—Mrs. Panhandle being one of those people who belittle present happenings as compared with the glories of the past. "Do all you can for her, of course, but don't worry—it does seem at times as if more than man was in the hands of the Lord. That animal'll be a mystery to me till me dyin' day. I'm sixty-two, and I never seen nothin' like her. She's got the constitution of a hippopotamus!"

Mr. Aurelius Dobson, going home to dinner late one afternoon, espied Mr. Crabbe, in all the glory of new spring apparel, solicitously accompanying Miss Arline Masters up the street. Miss Masters was a pretty girl—rather too buxom and brusque and straightforward to suit Mr. Dobson, whose taste ran to pink and white Shepherdess ladies, but very attractive, nevertheless. Mr. Dobson disapprovingly watched her flirting with the smitten Josh, and reflected dismally that not two hours ago from his window he had seen her flirting similarly—only rather more so—with the detestable Tom White. She was n't in love with either, of course, but she'd keep on till she caused trouble, see if she did n't. And with this direful foreboding in mind, he was somewhat astonished to see Mr. Crabbe take a Chesterfieldian but rather determined farewell of Miss Masters at her aunt's gate and cross over to him with a "stern yet brooding brow."

"Mr. Dobson, do for heaven's sake tell me what to do when a darned old mule refuses to eat!"

"You mean Pinders, of course?" The little lawyer pondered, brows drawn, as if the matter was indeed weighty. "Well, now, my boy, possibly—in fact, probably—the creature's teeth have become unequal to the

task of proper mastication. Then, of course, her general health may influence the matter. I'll tell you what: I'll drop in after supper and see her. Perhaps I can ascertain the cause of the trouble."

Mr. Dobson dropped in. He diagnosed Pinder's gastric strike as due to defective teeth, due in their turn to continued old age, and prescribed a bran-mash.

Mrs. Panhandle, invariably obliging, offered to produce the said mash then and there, the two gentlemen to remain and instruct Pinders in the gentle art of masticating this new edible. It was she who presently emerged from the kitchen with an iron spoon and a steaming bucket and delivered them into masculine hands. Mr. Dobson, expanding genially under the influence of such faith and trust, took the lead. If Joshua would kindly open her mouth, he would by means of the iron spoon make Pinders acquainted with the new delicacy.

At once it became apparent that Pinders resented this infantile method of providing nourishment; also, she may not have approved of the temperature of the mash, which in their ardor neither man had thought to allow sufficient cooling. Suffice it to say that right here the cataclysm occurred. Pinders's teeth may have succumbed before the relentless march of time, but it had n't seriously affected her heels. These latter useful members went up, and Mr. Dobson went down. The iron spoon took him in his off-eye, and there was a shiver of breaking glass. Also he had been deposited by the occurrence in a trough built with no provision for accidents, and, being wedged into it by the violence of his fall, seemed permanently settled, since no amount of frantic struggling served to budge him an inch. His yells would have done credit to a college cheer-leader.

Meantime Joshua Crabbe had undergone a still more terrific experience, for the bucket of mash, having been left trustingly at Pinders's rear, went into the air with the unerring precision and swiftness of a sky-rocket, to come down full upon Mr. Crabbe's beautiful new spring apparel, in which, as Miss Masters had said only a few hours ago, he looked like a Greek god. It being spring, and Mr. Crabbe having recently shed more or less in the way of underclothing, the hot mash instantly made itself painfully manifest to that person's cuticle. Mash covered his carefully brushed hair and clung to the end of his nose; his collar overflowed with mash, and it dripped methodically from his coat-tails.

He was doing a very intricate tango when Mrs. Panhandle, who had gone to the kitchen (presumably for more mash), rushed to the rescue. It was some time before the victims of the disaster recovered sufficiently to explain just what had happened.

Nevertheless, in spite of this intimidating fiasco, Mr. Dobson insisted that bran-mash was what Pinders needed. Being of a legal and technical turn of mind, he eventually reasoned that the mash may have been too hot, in which event, of course, one could not altogether blame Pinders.

"She won't die, and I can't give her away, because nobody'd have her," fumed young Joshua, who was deeply embittered by the loss of his sartorial decorations, "so what am I to do? If this thing keeps up, she'll outlive me. I can't let her starve, because Mrs. Panhandle would n't permit it. But she's got me goin', and no mistake."

Now, it so happened that the bran-mash idea, having been promulgated, took root and grew. Mr. Crabbe decided to administer it alone. Pinders appeared quite ailing one day, and refused to attempt other food. Really, the poor old critter was to be pitied, in a way, he thought; no teeth to chew with, and still having to live on——

However, the idea of sacrificing his raiment was far from the mind of Mr. Crabbe. Since Uncle Josh's death, he had no old clothes, but an inspiration having descended upon him, he sneaked an enormous red kimona and a "boudoir cap" belonging to Mrs. Panhandle out to the barn, and when he had carried out his bucket of mash, he donned these protective garments, and carefully approached Pinders with the iron spoon.

Pinders began to back. What recollection remained to her just then centred upon the odor of the warm mash, and she had no intention of repeating a sorrowful experience. Joshua followed her coaxingly with the spoon, a wary eye on her heels. In order to bring himself on a level with her rebellious nose, he climbed into a trough, continuing his inducements.

Pinders considered, her one eye fixed upon him meditatively; then suddenly, unexpectedly, she licked up the contents of the spoon with a forward lurch that cost him his balance. He teetered for an instant, then went backward. His kimonaed and capped person did a double somersault that no acrobat need have scorned, and landed with a bump at the feet of a pretty young woman who was standing in the doorway.

"Dear me!" said Miss Arline Masters.

Mr. Crabbe gave one wild glance, gathered himself together, and fled—fled as might the ball from the cannon's mouth, with Miss Masters watching his progress over the grounds toward the house and in at its door, his scarlet kimona flapping in the rear like the battle-flag of the retreating enemy, and the boudoir cap fluttering coquettish signals. Her cordial permission from Mrs. Panhandle to "run out, me dear, and see that old Methusalah of a mule the b'y's uncle left him," had indeed had an unlooked-for result!

"You may say what you please," said Mr. Joshua Crabbe to Attorney Dobson later, when he had related this humiliating experience, "but I'm going to shoot that old mule. The property can go hang. Life ain't worth a fig if I've got to play nursemaid to a confounded old beast that don't know enough to die."

But here the legal and technical mind of Aurelius Dobson rose and

subdued these petty rebellings. After all, it really was n't the mule's fault he fell—why, was n't poor old Pinders obediently taking the maah at the time? As for the kimona, to be sure it was embarrassing, but he'd take pleasure in explaining that little matter to the young lady himself, delicately, you know——

"You need n't bother," returned Mr. Crabbe ungratefully. "Let her marry Tom White," he added recklessly. "He ain't no fool, and I am, or I would n't 'a' been trying to feed a mule with a teaspoon. I'm through with Pinders, d' ye hear me? I wash my hands of her!"—wildly waving these indispensable members aloft. "She's yours—the county's—anybody's! I'm done with her!"

Mr. Dobson, attorney, went home thoughtful. He regretted to have beheld Joshua so nearly on the road to hysteria. Really, something must be done.

At the post-office he met Miss Masters, in airy conversation with Mr. Thomas White. She left him, however, to come over to where Mr. Dobson was patiently extracting a patent-medicine circular, and after a little preliminary and attractively feminine vocal skirmishing inquired:

"By the way, is Joshua ill? One never sees anything of him these days."

Mr. Dobson thought this decidedly bold and unmaidenly, but, after all, he had his young friend's welfare much at heart, and consequently explained just how dreadful Joshua had been feeling since the affair of the kimona, and he went on to tell her of Pinders's ill health and singular attacks, warming up to the matter of diet as suggested by himself, and the desirability of the kimona under such conditions. A mule of which the boy's uncle had been fond (no mention of the clause in the will), and, really, the poor old thing ought to have been dead years ago, but since she could n't or would n't die, somebody had to look after her, and, really, it was kind of Josh——

"Oh!" said Miss Masters, rather blankly.

Later in the day Mr. Dobson strolled forth to see if Joshua's hysteria had lessened or increased, and to offer further paternal advice. Mr. Dobson was smoking placidly as he walked along through the sweet spring air—that air so dangerous to the blood of youth and reminiscently stirring even to old age. He was thinking of many things, so that before he knew it he had bumped quite rudely into two figures by Joshua Crabbe's gate.

"Well!" said little Mr. Dobson, staring, perceiving with something like shock that the location of Mr. Crabbe's right arm made explanation necessary.

"She's promised to marry me," informed Joshua, in an awe-struck voice.

"I did, indeed," admitted Miss Arline Masters calmly, leaning on the gate and looking up appreciatively at the moon. "He'd been asking

me to, but I—I just could n't make up my mind, really. There were—others, you know. But when you told me about his kindness to that poor old mule—well, I just knew at once that he was a man in a million, and—*my* man. None of the other men I knew would have made themselves ridiculous for the sake of a poor old suffering beast. Why, Mr. Dobson, it was just *wonderful*!

“So when Aunt Clarice said to-night she meant to run over after supper and get Mrs. Panhandle's recipe for jam-cake, I said I'd go, too, and the minute I saw Josh I said to him: 'I've made up my mind. I'll marry you.' Oh, I'm so glad Pinders did n't die when she should have!” Mr. Dobson glanced wildly at Mr. Crabbe, but that gentleman was gazing nonchalantly at the moon. “We mean to have a veterinary examine her at once. I hope she's good for several years yet, the dear old thing! We'll see that she's taken good care of, won't we, Josh dear? And I'll never, never finish thanking you, dear Mr. Dobson, for explaining about that kimona.”

Dear Mr. Dobson looked resolutely at Joshua Crabbe until he caught that person's wandering gaze. The agonized appeal in the young man's face would have melted the heart of a crocodile. “For the Lord's sake,” it seemed to say, “don't let the cat out of the bag!”

The legal gentleman coughed slightly, gulped, and straightened. With a beaming, paternal smile, he held out his hand.

“My dear young people,” said he, “pray accept my blessing. ‘God moves in a mysterious way——’ Now, if you will kindly excuse me, I think I shall go pay my respects to Pinders.”

THE SORROW OF THE SEA

BY WILLIAM H. HAYNE

I WALK by the sea and muse
On the words I have often read:
“The former things shall have passed away
When the sea gives up her dead.”

And I think since Time was young
That the voice of the sea in woe
Has said to the earth, “You claim my dead,
But I cannot let them go.”

THE BANANA GIRL

BY LEONARD WOOD, JR.

IT was eleven in the morning, and it was humid and stifling in the banana fields of Costa Rica. The slow "chug-chug-chugging" of the fruit train, and the pony's munching of a ripe bunch of bananas, were the only sounds which reached Laura Watson's ears as she counted the green bunches of this fruit, which were piled five or six feet in height.

"Forty-eight," she murmured dejectedly to herself; and then she mounted Domingo and awaited the arrival of the train. Removing her huge yippe-yappa hat, she began to fan herself with it. She had been up since half past five, and she was tired. Her dark brown hair hung down her back in a braid; her big blue eyes were sunken in her face, tanned from having lived sixteen of her twenty years in the tropics. The sleeves of her blue flannel waist were rolled up above her elbows, showing a well-shaped but none too delicate pair of forearms. Those arms had worked and had been exposed to noonday suns and tropical storms.

The "chug-chugging" of the train was louder now. Laura looked down the tracks to watch the engine come around the bend, but the sight of the mist arising from the red-hot rails made her notice the heat all the more, and so she looked vacantly at the labyrinth of banana-plants about her.

Presently the train crept into view. She eagerly put on her yippe-yappa and endeavored to discern who was the banana-receiver standing on top of one of the cars, holding a huge black umbrella over his head. She could not quite make him out, but the minute he waved his hand and tossed her a kiss she knew who it was.

"It's Will Simons," she groaned, "and fresh as usual!"

As the train stopped before her and half a dozen Jamaican negroes sprang from the car, he commanded, "Hey, you niggers, don't load this fruit yet. Got to look it over." And then he said to Laura, as he started to climb down from the car, "How's Costa Rica's one and only lady time-keeper, the beautiful, energetic Miss Laura Watson?"

"Really, Mr. Simons, why bother to climb down from your perch? You can inspect the fruit from the top of the car as the Jamaicans pass it in," she said, ignoring his question.

"Well, as I said," he continued flippantly, "you are the only woman

time-keeper"—a time-keeper is a person who bosses the workmen on a banana plantation—"and, besides, you are the only unmarried American gal for miles around."

"Mr. Simons, I wish you would n't speak that way!" Her eyes flashed angrily. "Forty-eight or -nine bunches of bananas are there before you, and they are all cut 'two-thirds,' as the order from headquarters requested." Fruit cut "two-thirds" means two-thirds towards being ripe.

Simons made no answer, but with arms akimbo he stared at her for several moments out of his squinty gray eyes before exclaiming: "Say, you must think I am some dago, by the way you speak to me; I who——"

"Never mind saying it," she interrupted. "I'd like you a great deal better if you would not always try to thrust yourself to the front. Half-breed girls at Naranjito may put up with your flippancy because you're white——" Her voice suddenly trailed off, for she realized that she must not anger him, or else he would refuse on one pretext or another to accept the fruit.

"But I love you, girly; honest I do," he said, coming over to her and resting a hand on the saddle's pommel.

"Please, Mr. Simons—I must hurry back to Father; he has a bad attack of malaria."

Simons was about to seize her hand when a young man whom he had never seen before came riding down the railroad tracks. The new-comer was dressed wretchedly in an old pair of khaki trousers, torn flannel shirt, and dilapidated felt hat. "Who's the bum?" inquired Simons.

"He's my assistant," she replied. "He was just one of the many derelicts floating around here. He wanted work, and he seemed ill; and he had such honest brown eyes that I could n't resist taking him into my service. You know, Father"—she hesitated—"is n't able to be up and around these days. His name is Richard Barry." And when he rode up to her, Laura introduced the two men.

"How's the fruit turning out?" asked Dick. Simons scowled, and with a taunting look at Laura he casually remarked:

"I am sorry, but I can't take that fruit. It's cut 'three-fourths.' It would rot on the way to the United States. The steamer it is to go on is returning by a roundabout way."

Dick's face hardened, but Laura's burned red through the tan. "That fruit is cut 'two-thirds,' and you know it!" she angrily exclaimed. "You've got to take it. If you don't, you're a disgrace to the United Banana Company."

"H'm!" muttered Simons, as he returned to his car. "I guess this farm is a disgrace to the country—at least, in the way it is kept up, for it's good land." And before climbing up on the car he said menacingly, "The Company knows it's good land, and since it ain't barely paying

them to have the trains go by here—well, I hope you can afford to keep your place.” He climbed up on the train and ordered the engineer to start the engine. As the train wheezed off he yelled back, “We’re going to make the loop, and around five we’ll pass about one-fourth of a mile from here. And, Laura, if you have decided then to be half decent to me, I’ll back the train up here— Oh, what’s the use of talking to the like of you! Say,” he jeered, “have a care that those discharged Jamaicans, who have been raisin’ the devil round here, don’t burn up your house by *mistake*, while looking for a possible few dollars—’cause the Company might like the house some day!”

“I’m going to report you!” declared Laura.

“And do you think they will believe you?” Simons sneered. “You and your niggers don’t know how to cut fruit. Say, Laura, I’m not as bad as I sound. Hope you’ve got a sense of humor.”

“Humor!” exclaimed Dick Barry, who had been nervously resting his hand on his revolver. “I’d like to shoot that man!”

“Fortunately, there are not many like him,” said Laura, looking sorrowfully at her bananas, which should have netted her a few dollars. “But he’ll be on duty in this district for another month. We must cater to him as much as we can endure, for, Dick, as you know, we owe our four Jamaicans a whole week’s pay, and they can get work elsewhere.”

Slowly the two rode off along the tracks, the only roads in Banana Land. Neither spoke; both were deep in thought. Presently, the horses of their own accord turned off on a trail leading from the tracks into the banana plants. About a hundred yards in was a good-sized clearing, where a one-story wooden house stood. It was painted gray, and had a green, corrugated iron roof. Its veranda was screened with wire netting, with huge patches of mosquito netting in places where the wire screening had rotted through.

A large, fat colored woman, Laura’s stepmother, was feeding the chickens in front of the house, while nearby, lying in a hammock hung from two palm-trees, was a huge bulk of a white man, Laura’s father. Upon seeing his daughter, he propped a bleary face on one arm, and shouted, “Well?”

Laura looked at him, but did not answer. His general appearance told her all she wanted to know. Turning her horse, she rode up to the colored woman and demanded hotly, “Are you trying to kill Dad? Why did you let him get hold of any more liquor? Jess, one of these days it’ll be too much for him——”

“He ain’t any more your’n than mine, an’ I’ll do what I want with him, you fresh gal!” she snapped.

Laura bit her lip and said nothing. Dismounting, she gave her horse to Dick, the one person who understood. Her father called her again, but, pretending not to hear him, she went into the house, only to hear

herself cursed by her parent for not obeying him. She realized that he did not know what he was saying, and pitied him. She was tired and disappointed. Throwing herself dejectedly into a chair, her feelings gave way to tears, and she cried silently.

There was nothing very much out of the ordinary in the sorry plight of the Watson family, that is, for Central or South America. There were many others like them. Mr. Watson was a failure, and, to forget his failure, he had taken to drink. And when his wife had died four years before, he had sent for Laura, who was attending school in the States. When she returned, she found that her father had been wrecked both morally and physically by too much drink in this hot, stifling climate. Her mother had been burdened with all the responsibilities of the plantation, and upon Laura's return they fell to her. The plantation, in spite of her efforts, was going to pieces. Big tracts of land were being left uncultivated because of lack of funds. Busy all day, she saw little of her father. Then one day, when he returned from Naranjita, he brought with him this colored woman, Jess, as his wife. He had married her while drunk. His marriage nearly killed Laura.

"What in the devil are you crying about?" demanded a rough voice from the doorway. Laura started. She had not heard him enter.

Wiping her eyes as she sprang to her feet, she faltered, "Why, nothing, Dad."

"Nix! nix!" he growled. He staggered towards her and seized her arms. "What are you crying about, Laura?"

"I did n't mean to cry, Dad. I was just thinking of Mother," she fibbed, not having the heart to tell him the truth.

"Oh, no, you were n't!" he contradicted.

"Well, then, the bananas! Mr. Simons refused them because they were n't—or at least so he said—cut 'two-thirds.'"

"That was n't the reason," snarled the old man. "I saw Mr. Simons myself several weeks ago, and—and—he wants you."

"Dad!" she exclaimed disgustedly. "I won't listen to you any more. Let me go!" and she jerked herself free.

"Listen, my young lady," he continued, "you're mine, and I have given you away!"

"Really! And who will look after the place when I am gone. This Simons, as you know, is no fit man for a decent girl to marry. He's always getting himself into trouble, and—I won't discuss this any further. You are not sober; and Jess," she flashed, "ought to be whipped for giving you drink!"

"Simons—Simons," murmured the old man—"let me see—he said—yes, he said he would buy the place from me for a good sum, and that I could always live here."

"Father, don't you see, he would sell it to the U. B. C. for a huge

sum, and *they* would cast you out?" But she said no more, realizing his condition made him unfit to argue with, and hurriedly she left the room to find Dick.

She had only known Dick Barry for twelve days, but they were the best of friends. He seemed well-educated and a gentleman; but rather ambitionless, she thought. Being an orphan and having no family restrictions upon him, he yielded to the call of the wanderlust and—as he had explained to her—"just drifted."

She spied him stretched out under a shade-tree. He was writing in a note-book. Upon seeing her, he put it away and sprang to his feet. Admiration and pity were intermingled in the way he looked at her.

"Well, assistant time-keeper," she said as gayly as she could, "what shall we do about this morning's episode?"

"Why," he replied, "there is only one thing to do, and that is to go right in to Naranjita and report Simons to headquarters."

"But I am afraid," she said, "that they will take his word to ours. He has been in their employ for a number of years, and is regarded as a capable man. If there were only another company down here to which we could sell our fruit!"

Dick Barry saw the tears—tears of anger at the injustice she was suffering—rise in her eyes. The man in him came forth. Gently he placed an arm about her and forced her to sit down upon an old piece of matting under a tree.

"Now you just calm yourself and forget about this morning," he said consolingly. "I'll go and try to hunt up something for both of us to eat; and when lunch is over I'll take the motor-car and hustle into Naranjita."

"You're a blessing, Dick," she said sincerely.

While Dick was getting the lunch, she suddenly remembered a pair of khaki trousers which she had just finished for him the night before, and she rushed into the house to get them. It would speak badly for the plantation, she thought, if Dick made his appearance at U. B. C. headquarters in dilapidated clothing.

When she returned, he was spreading the food out on an impromptu table in the shape of a board.

"You scamp! I thought you had run away," he jokingly scolded. Helping her to be seated, he added, "This is all Jess had ready, but it's enough, I guess."

"Surely," she said, sitting down. "Look, here's a present for you. Let's hope they fit." Whereupon she held up a gray flannel shirt of her father's and the trousers. It struck them as funny—her presenting him with a pair of home-made trousers during their nomadic meal—and they both laughed over it. Then they thoroughly enjoyed their baked sweet-potatoes, fried bananas, and coffee.

The meal over, Laura went over to the shed where the motor was kept, to examine it, and Dick hastened to his room to dress in his new clothes. The shirt he found to be a trifle too large for him, as Mr. Watson was six feet three, and he but five feet eleven; but the trousers fitted beautifully.

When he reached the motor-shed, he found Laura busily oiling the engine. The motor was an engine-run hand-car, with a big seat in front and a little one in the rear. He immediately began finicking with it, and presently had it in working order. Then together they shoved the motor onto a side-track which led to the main railway.

Just at that moment several "puck! puck! pucks!" sounded in the distance.

"Pistol-shots!" exclaimed Dick.

They both listened attentively for a minute, during which the firing kept up.

"Those shots came from the direction of the fruit train," said Laura. "Remember, that wretch Simons said they were going to make the loop?"

"And he said something, too, about——" Dick tried to remember.

"Concerning those discharged Jamaicans who have turned into bandits," reminded Laura.

"Well, I am going to see what's up!" exclaimed Dick, springing into the motor and starting the engine.

"Here, wait for me," begged Laura.

"You'd better not come," he warned.

"I insist!" and she sprang into the seat beside him.

The engine sputtered, and they were off.

As they spun over the tracks, they strained their ears for more sounds of firing. As Dick was busy with the engine, Laura had drawn her pistol and held it in readiness. Presently they came to quite a little up-grade; in fact, it was so steep that the wheels slipped once or twice. Just as they reached the top they heard the faint sputtering of another motor. Dick turned off the engine and stopped the car.

"It sounds as if they were coming at a terrible speed," he remarked. "They had better be careful or their motor will jump the track."

"I wonder who it can be?"

"Some one either fleeing or in search of help," reasoned Dick aloud. "It must be some one fleeing. Nobody would dare go at the rate they are going if fear did n't make them. Ten to one that bunch of Jamaicans have held up the fruit train and robbed the safe!"

Now the sputtering of the approaching motor was quite loud.

"Here, help me turn the motor," requested Dick, whereupon both of them faced the car about on the tracks. "Now, Laura," he instructed, "hide here in these bushes, and when the motor comes into view, wave your hat to me if it is filled with niggers. I'll be at the bottom of this

incline. If it has the niggers, I'll leave the car on the track. They won't have time to stop their car, since they'll be going down-grade. The collision will be a mild one. They'll either be thrown out by it, or will try to jump. Any way, they'll be so dazed by it all that we'll have time to cover them with our revolvers. Shoot only if you have to!"

"Trust me, Dick!" said Laura, quivering with excitement.

Dick in the motor shot down the eighty yards of incline. He threw on the brakes, and, springing from the car, half hid behind some bushes. There he anxiously waited for the oncoming motor to dart over the top of the hillock. What a noise it was making! It was very near now. He noticed Laura. She was clutching her revolver in one hand, and held the other over her mouth. Not, he was sure, that she feared she would scream, but that instinct made her do it.

"Niggers, Dick! Niggers!" and she waved her hat fiercely.

Half a minute later, with a whirr, the motor shot into view. The five or six men on it yelled a warning to one another as they saw the car below. The brakes were pushed on. One man jumped. Another caught a glimpse of Dick and shot at him. Laura fired. The brakes were beginning to work when the frightened, squirming blacks accidentally took off the brakes, and the machine went hurtling into the Watson's motor with a crash.

None of the Jamaicans were caught in the collision. All four jumped just before the impact, and were hurled several feet through the air. Dick, in self-defense, shot one dead as he rose to his feet. Another hurt himself so that he could not rise, but he fired twice at Laura, fortunately missing her. One Jamaican meekly surrendered, while the fourth lost no time in trying to get away. Dick finally shot him in the leg, and as he fell his pistol flew from him, rendering him both helpless and harmless.

"There were five," shouted Dick. "We've got four of them."

"The first one to jump," explained Laura. "I missed him, and he fled in among the banana trees."

Their excitement and the noise of the pistol-shots had been so great that they had not heard the clatter of an engine as it drew near; but, hearing it, they barely had time to remove the wreck from the track before the engine and caboose of the fruit train hurtled by. The engineer saw them and quickly threw on the brakes.

"Them—them robbers!" shouted the Jamaican fireman. "We've got some men hurt and must get 'em to Naranjita, *pronto!*"

He and the engineer sprang from the train and helped Dick put the outlaws into the caboose, after Dick had helped Laura onto the train. A few minutes later it was off, and as Dick sprang into the caboose, he saw Laura bending over a prostrate body.

"Dick," she murmured, "it's Simons! He's dead, poor man."

Dick said nothing, but, to distract her attention from the catastrophe,

he asked her to get some water for an injured Jamaican, while he attended to the wound. Two hours later the train arrived at Naranjita; and within another hour all except Dick were in the town's little hospital. Laura was made to go to bed. She did n't want to, but the doctor insisted. It took her several hours to get to sleep, but when she did, she did not waken until fourteen hours later.

Laura felt much better the next morning, although she found herself very nervous. She arose immediately, as she wanted to see Dick and arrange about going with him to headquarters. Then she remembered that Simons was dead; that there was no reason now for their making the call. Later, after she had dressed and breakfasted, she eagerly inquired after Dick, and the nurse informed her that he was downstairs on the veranda; that for over an hour he had been anxiously awaiting her. Whereupon, she immediately hurried down to see him, and as she was descending the stairs she was greeted with a cheery "Good morning! How are you?"

She was on the verge of answering him—but whom did she see before her? Not Dick, surely, in that smart white duck suit and panama? But there was no mistaking his smile!

"What on earth," she gasped, pointing at his immaculate attire, "does this Cinderella change mean?"

"Never mind!" he laughed, and quite masterfully demanded a kiss.

"Dick!"

"Give me a kiss!"

"Well," she smiled, "seeing that you insist, and providing that you promise to explain the wherefores of your happiness and giddy attire, we'll meet half-way and you'll kiss me."

He needed no urging, and as he held her tightly in his arms, he explained: "The U. B. C. brought me from America just to investigate the honesty of such men as Simons and several others. Headquarters had received many complaints concerning these men; and if Simons had not been killed, he would now most likely be in jail."

"You an expert detective!" she laughed, a trifle unnaturally. "And I made you a pair of trousers, which you wore with so much pride! It is a wonder *you* did n't see through their crude tailorship. How you have fooled me!"

Then he whispered something in her ear. She blushed slightly, hesitated, then nodded her head and kissed him. "And Dad?"

"We'll take him back to the U. S. A., of course. Jess, with forty dollars a month, will be more than contented to remain here in her native land."

"You darling!" And a doctor, who came suddenly to the door, took one look at them and returned as suddenly as he had appeared.

A TIDE IN THE AFFAIRS OF JONES

By CORINNE ROCKWELL SWAIN

"**D**EARIE," observed Mrs. Jones, crawfishing over to her husband to be hooked up, "had n't we better go down next Saturday and close up the bungalow for the winter? This lovely Indian summer weather won't last forever."

"Good idea," he agreed, bending frowningly to his task; adding, after a moment's thought, "But how about Aunt Rebecca? She comes on Thursday, you know. Shall we have to postpone the trip, or could we take her along?"

"I've been wondering whether she would n't enjoy it. She hates the big resorts, and 'Bonnie Dune' is so restful, she'd love it. I want to make her visit especially pleasant this year, because—well, I want to coax her to send her piano-player to the shore when she goes to Europe next summer. I'm crazy to have the dancing class at our house, and Maudie Swift will teach us, if we can be sure of music."

"Great head! I should think a pleasant little jaunt would make Auntie come across without fail. She'd have a chance to see what a nice home her pet would have, and you could enlarge upon our love for music, and our remoteness from the fountain-head, and all that. Yes, honey, that's a good proposition!"

Aunt Rebecca made no objection, though she had that genius for leaving one in doubt as to whether she was pleased or not, which is the armament of a meek and quiet spirit. On Saturday afternoon, the two-car train which ran down from the junction dropped them at the silent little Resthaven station. It was a glorious autumn day, and when the cottage was opened and aired, and the provision basket unpacked, even Aunt Rebecca looked optimistic. After a good supper, Mrs. Jones took an inventory of supplies, and arranged sleeping quarters, while her husband strolled out to the porch with a good cigar and that luxurious sense of nothing-to-do-till-Monday which is the chief joy of the week-end. He approved of the sunset, a superbly dramatic arrangement in orange and gray, and thrills of half-obliterated poetic impulse stirred within his soul. He had been the Class Poet once, and had fancied

himself more than an amateur at sonnet building. He smiled benignly upon Mrs. Jones, as she came out and stood beside him.

"Stay here," he urged, "and watch that castle of cloud, with the changing flames streaming up behind its battlements. Is n't it magnificent?"

"Lovely!" she agreed, with a slightly preoccupied smile. "Have you filled the lamps, dearie, and looked up the little oil-stove for Auntie's room? It may be cold in the night, and she's so sensitive. And have you looked to see how much kerosene we have?" He had n't. A trip to the cellar revealed an empty can and a rusty stove; and he started for the distant "general store" with a slight sinking sensation in his first fine careless rapture. On his return, his wife met him at the door and took the full can.

"I'm so sorry," she deprecated; "I meant to tell you to get some eggs for breakfast. We can usually depend on getting such nice ones here, and Auntie never eats anything else in the morning. Get some bananas too. Do you mind very much, dear?" He took the basket she handed him, and vanished silently in the chilly, deepening dusk. The sunset glory and the sonnet-rapture had departed. At the store, good old Pop Handy shook his hoary whiskers.

"No, Mr. Jones; them four eggs in the box is all I got, and I could n't rightly recommend 'em. They're storage, and, besides, they been around the store quite some time. Got some real good dried beef, though, and sardines. Bananas? Sold the last one three days ago, and ain't had time to order no more. How about some canned peaches? Looks a leetle like a no'theaster, now, don't it?"

With a load of tin cans and apprehension, Jones traversed once more the lonely street of closed cottages, to the gleam of his own light, away up on the inlet. When he had presented his offering, he brought up two more hods of coal and finished fixing the oil-stove, and then it was bed-time. The next day dawned gray and northeasterly, and the anticipated strolls on the beach gave way to sitting around a driftwood fire. Still, Mrs. Jones argued, this afforded the cottage an opportunity to make its impression; and she discoursed at length upon the subject of music to Aunt Rebecca, who sat in the best rocker, purple-shawled, a trifle sniffly, and entirely noncommittal. By nine in the evening it was raining hard; and in the midst of Mr. Jones's assertion that the theory of the equinoctial storm was obsolete Aunt Rebecca shrieked and clapped her hand to the back of her neck. Everybody looked at the ceiling of the living-room, where another drop was forming, and, with an exclamation of dismay, host and hostess charged up to the guest-room.

They found a little stream pattering down on Aunt Rebecca's suitcase, just inside the closet door, and four more little streams had found weak places in the shingles of the gable, after the long drought, while

in the angle of a door-jamb a steady trickle defied any pail to get under it. Jones hunted receptacles to set under the perpendicular leaks, while Mrs. Jones brought a basket of discarded clothing, and ministered to the trickle.

"One tub, three pails, one wash-bowl, one dish-pan; two aprons, one pair pajamas, one hickory shirt, two bath-towels, and a bunch of newspapers," enumerated Mr. Jones wearily, from the door: "that ought to hold it for awhile. Next, we fix up Auntie in our room, and bring some cots downstairs, don't we?"

The night was filled with music, of an elemental kind, but the cares that infested the day refused to fold their tents; for there were constant sorties to fix banging shutters, shift the pails, and wring out the cloths. About three in the morning, a new streamlet tracked Aunt Rebecca down. They moved her bed to the other side of the room and set to work anew, while her meek brown eyes looked on, from beneath the ample frill of her boudoir cap. She made but one gentle comment, choosing the psychological moment with fiendish accuracy. ✓

"So this," said Aunt Rebecca, "is where you come to rest."

It was a worn and weary trio that waded through the raw orange of the wet, new-gravelled street, to the station platform, in the sullen gray of Monday morning. The local roofer was there, and while Jones seized the opportunity for an interview, Aunt Rebecca took an influenza tablet, poured a fresh supply of camphor on her handkerchief, and turned to her niece.

"Ethel," she observed with plaintive conviction, "we've had an awful time, of course, but there's one reason why I'm not sorry I came. If I had n't seen this place for myself, I might have been unwise enough to ask you to take care of my piano-player next summer. Now I know better."

NOW

BY CHARLOTTE FISKE BATES

MY life slips out its past and is-to-be
And hugs the present tight:
Though pain and darkness fill futurity,
What matters it to-night?

My life and heart were dreary yesterday;
I lived—scarce caring how!
Smiling, I cast the memory away,
Pressing the lips of Now!

"COME SEBEN, COME 'LEBEN"

By KENNETH GROESBECK

WASHINGTON BISMARCK JONES was perfectly happy. He had been well fed on corn-pone and molasses, the temperature in the damp cellar wavered around blood-heat, and he held three kings. And it was one of the bitterest recollections of his primitive life that his opponent should have chosen just that moment to push back his chair with an oath—for Washington Bismarck did not see the signal—and declare a misdeal. For weeks afterwards he tried to piece together the happenings that came so fast to the little crowd of negroes in the damp cellar, but his mind was unequal to the task. There had been shouts, some one had hit him, he had swung a chair—and he was in prison.

Such had been the miraculous transition from a state of bliss to one of doubtful desirability. And now, after weeks of being pushed around from cell to court-room, some one told him he was to go for five years to the turpentine camps of Florida, because of—what had the man said?—assault with intent to kill.

They marched him in chains from the wheezy train across miles of level sandy country, spotted with clumps of palmetto stubble, under the blazing sun. He carried a bundle of all he possessed, and on the top of that bundle was a possession dearer to the heart of Washington Bismarck Jones than the whole wide world—his banjo. There was just one thought in his mind as he tramped stolidly along, his eyes on the battered shoes of the convict in front of him: would they let him keep it? And they did. So when he was thrust into the big whitewashed room with thirty others of his kind, and they made no attempt to take it away from him, even when he began to pick tentatively at the strings, he muttered contentedly, "Dis ain't so bad, nohow."

Which was Washington's way of accomplishing the philosophic observation that anticipation is usually worse than realization.

The very next morning, it being Monday, he began the life which was to be his lot for five years. At daybreak they were aroused, and given a hurried "bait" of salt meat and biscuit, then they filed out of the stockade, hatless, coatless, bootless, and began their long tramp across country, an armed guard or two and a couple of hound dogs trailing along behind. Into infested swamps and marshes they plunged up to their waists, and the day's work began. It was fearfully hard work, running back and forth, back and forth, between the pine trees and the barrels

of resinous gum and pitch. By noon Washington was sure he was going to die. He was sick with the burning sun, his feet were cut and bleeding from the sharp blades of the palmetto. And when the squad filed back into the stockade, late in the evening, his mind was black with the lust for murder.

But they gave him cold beans, fat meat, and corn-bread, which he ate ravenously. And as he sat with his fellows in the dirty bunk-room after supper and fingered the strings of his beloved banjo, his anger died. It was n't so bad, after all.

So it went for a year, and at the end of that time he was quite contented. He was very strong, of a naturally cheerful and inconsequent disposition, and his banjo made him a king among men. And then the misfortune came. For one night, as the guard was passing, a half-breed negro made some remark, there was a roar of laughter, and disaster fell upon Washington Bismarck Jones. The guard kicked him savagely as he sat against the wall, which was not so bad, but—they took away the banjo. And away went his hard-earned prestige, away went the one comfort of his life.

It is very difficult to realize what a difference it makes when, having exactly one source of happiness, this is taken away. It turned Washington in a twinkling from a docile, obedient prisoner into the most dangerous man in camp. And the guard, old in experience with people of his kind, looked doubtfully at his great arms and legs showing through the tattered convict stripes as he sprawled sullenly on the floor, and temporized.

"Tell you what, Wash," he said good-naturedly, looking down at the mighty form on the floor. "You give us a good chase to-morrer—no sneakin', mind yuh—and we 'll give ye back th' plink-plink. Hey?"

In an instant Washington Bismarck Jones was his old, contented self. "'Deed Ah will, boss, suh," he said eagerly. "'Deed Ah will."

He knew what it meant. The hound dogs were too valuable to lose their ability to scent a runaway prisoner for lack of practice. So once a week—and it was the worst punishment the camp afforded—some prisoner pretended to make a break for freedom. There had been cases where the ferocious pursuers had made the freedom one from the cares of this world, and others where the treacherous swamps or the crocodiles had taken their share in the game. But Washington went to sleep with a light heart, for the banjo was to be his again.

They gave Washington an extra ration of corn-pone the next morning, and, because it was Sunday, the whole camp assembled to see him start, watching him, for the most part, with dull, lack-lustre eyes. So off he ran, on the tips of his toes, his big body delighting in the imitation freedom, and disappeared from sight in a clump of low-growing marsh shrubbery. They gave him twenty minutes' start, and Washington made the most of it. He plunged recklessly through marsh and sand, doubled cunningly

on his tracks, but all the time kept clear of the open-water lakes he passed occasionally. For he knew that the dogs would lose the scent if he took to swimming, and that meant no more banjo.

Perhaps two hours later he stopped panting at the edge of a small lake, and looked around him. Faintly in the distance he could hear the baying of the dogs and the shouts of the men, and he smiled. He was indeed "giving them a good chase," but it was nearly time to let them catch him. Would n't do to have a fool nigger show too much skill at getting away, he reasoned simply. These yere white men—they did n't like that. And then, suddenly, he lifted his head and listened. There it was again: a cry—and it sounded like a child.

He ran rapidly along the shore of the lake, and, suddenly rounding a wooded bend, he saw her. She was huddled on a tiny patch of marshy earth no more than three feet across that jutted raggedly out of the water. An upturned boat floated sluggishly near her. And alongside the patch of earth lay what looked like a log in the water, motionless, patient. Washington knew perfectly well that it was only a matter of minutes before that log would climb slowly upon the little island, its cruel eyes unwinking and inexorable, and then—— In the distance the dogs bayed again, louder.

For once in his life, Washington Bismarck Jones *thought*. If he went away, retracing his steps, they would soon catch him. It was about dinner-time, and that was when he ought to be caught. If he plunged into the water, two things would happen. The dogs would lose the scent, the white men would be displeased, and he would never see his banjo again. Also, there was that thing that lay so silent, so close to the sobbing child. What would *that* do as he swam up beside it?

Just at that moment the log moved, and the child, watching it with fascinated and horror-struck eyes, shrieked. And Washington Bismarck Jones plunged into the water, and swam, great, rushing, powerful strokes, wondering dimly at himself. "Suttenly," he murmured as he swam—"suttenly dis am de end."

Almost instantly the quiet lake was lashed into a tempest, centring about the foam that swirled around two mighty bodies thrashing in its centre. For the log was electrified into horrible life, writhing with great heaves of a mighty tail under the mighty body that bestrode it, whose strong black fingers clutched convulsively at the evil snout, in the desperate attempt to find the eyes. And then, all of a sudden, there was a mighty convulsion, a swirl, and the tempest ceased. And up on the tiny island crawled Washington Bismarck Jones.

Into the lake again, the child on his back—out on the other side—up with staggering steps to the great house that now appeared beyond the trees, and then the weary walk back to the stockade, through the noon silence.

Quite clear he was in his mind as to what he had done. The silence was the worst sign of all. The dogs had lost the scent, and he had lost his banjo. And dully he wondered again why he had done it, and found no answer.

They were even angrier than he had expected, those men behind the palisade. His dripping clothes told the story of how he had escaped them and spoiled a morning's sport, and they had lost a dog worth six niggers. So they broke the banjo over his head, and put him in the underground cell to think things over on an empty stomach.

To this day they tell the story of how the Governor and his little daughter came to the Turpentine Camp and took away a worthless nigger who had spoiled a hunt and killed a dog. And behind the Governor's big house, beside his own cabin, Washington Bismarck Jones sits all the day long and lovingly fingers the strings of a banjo such as never appeared to him in his wildest dreams. He does not understand, but the world is very good.

THE WHITE ROSE

BY DANSKE DANDRIDGE

I SEE in the garden-border
A dream of beauty rare,
For the white rose blooms, in order
That the moon may call her fair.

In the tangled garden lonely,
No other blooms are nigh,—
The trellised roses only,
And the white rose of the sky.

And all the night is sleeping,
Except the whippoorwill,
And the distant mountains keeping
A drowsy vigil still.

Come out to the garden, lover,
And drink the dreaming rose,
And bid the moon discover
The secret that she knows.

Then turn to the lady tender,
And read in her eyes' love-light
The meaning they surrender
Of the rose, and the moon, and the night.



WAYS OF THE HOUR

A DEPARTMENT OF CURRENT COMMENT AND
CRITICISM—SANE, STIMULATING, OPTIMISTIC

THE PATH OF GLORY

THE Mexican war talk brought out a great deal of fine spirit, and it brought out also a whole lot of buncombe. The most vociferous son of Mars that I met, in the hot-bed which skirted the Mexican border, was a pale but fiery clerk in a dry-goods store (where he made the aisles to ring); the most quiet people were the army men and women themselves.

Those who are bred to arms know what war means. Sherman knew, and his language was plain; the South knew, and it has not entirely forgotten; and the North knew, too—although it chanced not to know all. It is strange to me that among the foremost in war spirit, in this year 1914, were some Civil War veterans themselves. Of all persons, they should be the ones to dread war, from the ground up, rather than lament the fact that their marching days were over. If it had been 1865 instead of 1914, they would have been of different mind, I fancy. Yet this is not criticism; nobody can criticise love of country and of Flag, and eagerness to maintain them. I merely would remark that war still is war; and war of 1914 is not less in its horrors than war of 1863.

The army and navy know—and know better than the clerk behind the counter, or even the National Guardsman. Yet war means more, in an attractive way (if there be any attractive way) to the officer in army and navy than to the civilian. It means promotion, activity, and the opportunity to make use of those talents hoarded and coddled for just such an opportunity. But I have failed to meet an officer, old or young, who did not hope for peace.

You might think that somewhere in army or navy circles there might lurk the spirit militant. You might rather expect to find it in the family, at least; perhaps among the non-combatants—if, when war arrives, spreading wide its ghastly field, a non-combatant is a possible quantity. You might anticipate finding it in a woman whose father had been a soldier, whose husband is a soldier, whose sons are soldiers, and whose daughters have married "into the army." But when the news of Vera Cruz came, and the troops were hastened southward, she was the saddest woman in town. Glory? Speak not to her of glory. The Flag? Ah, the Flag. She had been born wrapped in the Flag, and her country was sacred. But the glory of war somehow did not appeal to her. When some of us spoke lightly of war, she looked as though she was listening to fools. War is only war, wherever fought, however fought, and why ever fought. To those who know, and realize that they know, it has but the one meaning.

EDWIN L. SABIN.

OUR NATIONAL RAG-TIME

IT has been said by no less an authority than John Philip Sousa that there is no such thing as "patriotic music"—the voice of a nation sounding its triumph or grief in its own tongue—and to prove this the fact is cited that all the great national anthems are stolen from the music of other countries.

This seems strange, for each city, even, has its own sounds and scents—so much so that a blind man could not mistake London for Paris, or either for New York. No doubt the tunes picked out on banjos by the untrained fingers of the Southern dinky, and said to be essentially American, would prove on investigation to be the echo of some long-dead African ear; but to us they breathe plantation love under the magnolias.

Syncopated music—rag-time—that came so valiantly in a few years ago, is surely American. Vilmos Westony, a Hungarian pianist, admires the rag because it has the American dash and vim, and he claims that no European composer can produce it. Nor can the European play it with any good effect, as Westony's own red-coated countrymen prove very amusingly, sometimes, when they attempt it.

It is our own very patter—the dim vibration of life—that we often think we hear in the murmur of a crowded theatre, between the acts, or at a supper restaurant, when electric forces are loosed, and laughter and gay voices and the clink of glasses all chime in an odd tempo that is like the tramp of a jubilant army.

Musical discoverers, hearing this voice, have sought to set our most ringing anthems to it, in place of the stolen lilts they are now sung to. They even argue that our Star-Spangled Banner be hung on the rag-time peg, where we might bravely say we saw it through the early light of the dawn. But syncopated music was carried to a popular grave in a funereal cake-walk so far as artistic acclaim was accorded it in this country: it was associated with the stigma of vaudeville; but, again, this would indicate that it is the true voice of the people—the poetry of “the push.”

It echoes our life—not, maybe, the life of yacht-decks or country houses, but the hurrying, teeming existence of our American cities, with people thronging through the streets, eddying in and out of shops and hotels, elbowing their way into cars and motor-houses and subways, jumping in and out of taxis at smart restaurant doors in the great chase after business, pleasure, and excitement.

The very monotone of rag-time is our own echo, for if there is one characteristic of us, it is the manner in which we all seek to swim in the same pool. Keep moving—step lively—these are our slogans, and let him who dares neglect them. It means absolute failure to depart from the restless procession after something. We must choose between the quick and the dead.

So-called darky melody, played in the odd, broken time that is called rag, comes nearer to being American music than anything that has yet been evolved. If Sousa tried his hand at it, maybe he would produce that which he claims does not exist—national music.

KATE MASTERSON.

ELECTRICITY IN THE OPERATING-ROOM

ELECTRICITY has steadily and persistently spread from the days of Faraday and Galvani until it now bids fair to displace almost every other working force. In man's hands it has entered the domains of the sea, the air, the mines, the circumambient ether, the workshop, the home, the field, the orchard, the library, and the physician's and dentist's offices.

Now it has jumped into the surgeon's sanctum-sanctorum, the operating-room. Instead of the old saw, the chisel, the hand instruments that fatigued the surgeon so that his hand often trembled and lost its efficiency, the electric bone-cutter has there taken up its convenient and permanent abode.

The drill, the hammer, the chisel, the reamer, the trephine, must now pass with the snuff-box and coats of mail into the limbo of forgotten

things. Electric-machine makers have produced a sterilizable motor for the use of surgeons, all clad in perfect aseptic apparel.

These sterilizable hand-motors are reliable and certain, and the surgeon can attach any sort of blade, drill, saw, or cutting instrument, to the motor. Dr. Walter G. Stern of Cleveland, who was acquainted with the small electric hand-drills used in the steel and iron trades, used these as models and guides and adapted them at a very small cost for surgical purposes.

The bone-cutting electric drill is fitted with a removable, universal hold which will firmly grasp and automatically centre all manner of cutting instruments of any size to three-eighths of an inch in diameter at the shank. It can be run on any kind of a street lighting current.

Dr. Stern's method of use includes the sterilizing the whole outfit in canvas bags. After the usual preparation, disinfection and manipulation of the dressings, just as is done in all operating-rooms, the operator seizes the motor firmly at the handle and inserts the precise instrument desired.

This has added greatly to the success of surgery, and the efficiency and good judgment of the surgeon. He has leisure and reserve energy enough to apply his muscles and blood to other purposes.

LEONARD KEEN HIRSHBERG, A.B., M.A., M.D.

IMEROS

BY EDGAR SALTUS

MY heart a haunted manor is, where Time
Has fumbled noiselessly with mouldering hands:
At sunset ghosts troop out in sudden bands,
At noon 't is vacant as a house of crime;

But when, unseen as sound, the night-winds climb
The higher keys with their unstilled demands,
It wakes to memories of other lands,
And thrills with echoes of enchanted rhyme.

Then, through the dreams and hopes of earlier years,
A fall of phantom footsteps on the stair
Approaches near, and ever nearer yet,
A voice rings through my life's deserted ways:
I turn to great thee, Love. The empty air
Holds but the spectre of my own regret.